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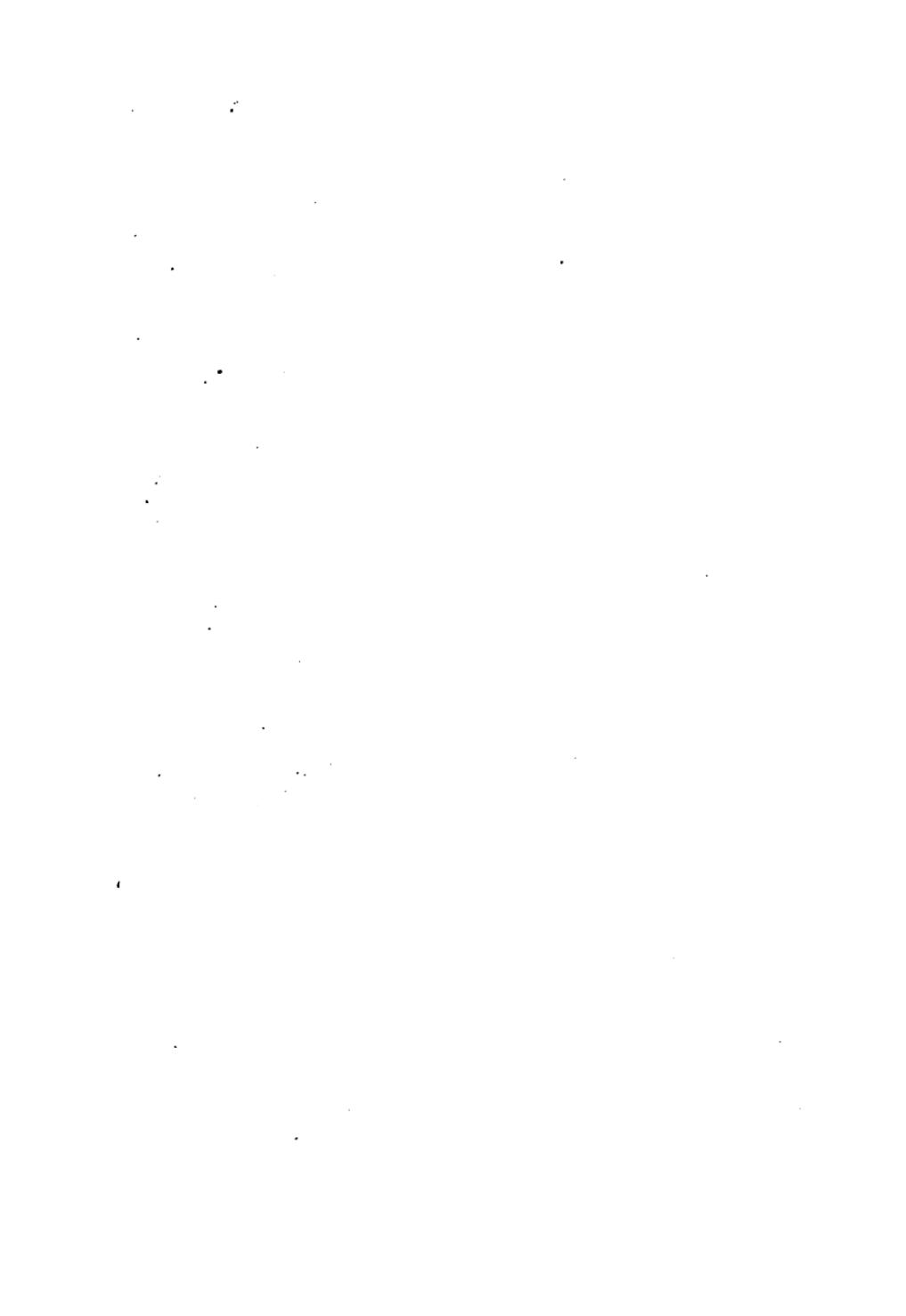
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THE CHURCH  
*IN THE*  
C H E R U B I M



## **THE CHURCH IN THE CHERUBIM.**



THE  
CHURCH IN THE CHERUBIM  
OR,  
THE GLORY OF THE SAINTS.

BY THE  
REV. JAMES GOSSET TANNER, M.A.  
MINISTER OF CHRIST CHAPEL, MAIDA HILL.

‘And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them:—JOHN, xvii. 22.



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1875.

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To my late Congregation

AT

CHRIST CHURCH, WINCHESTER,

BY WHOM

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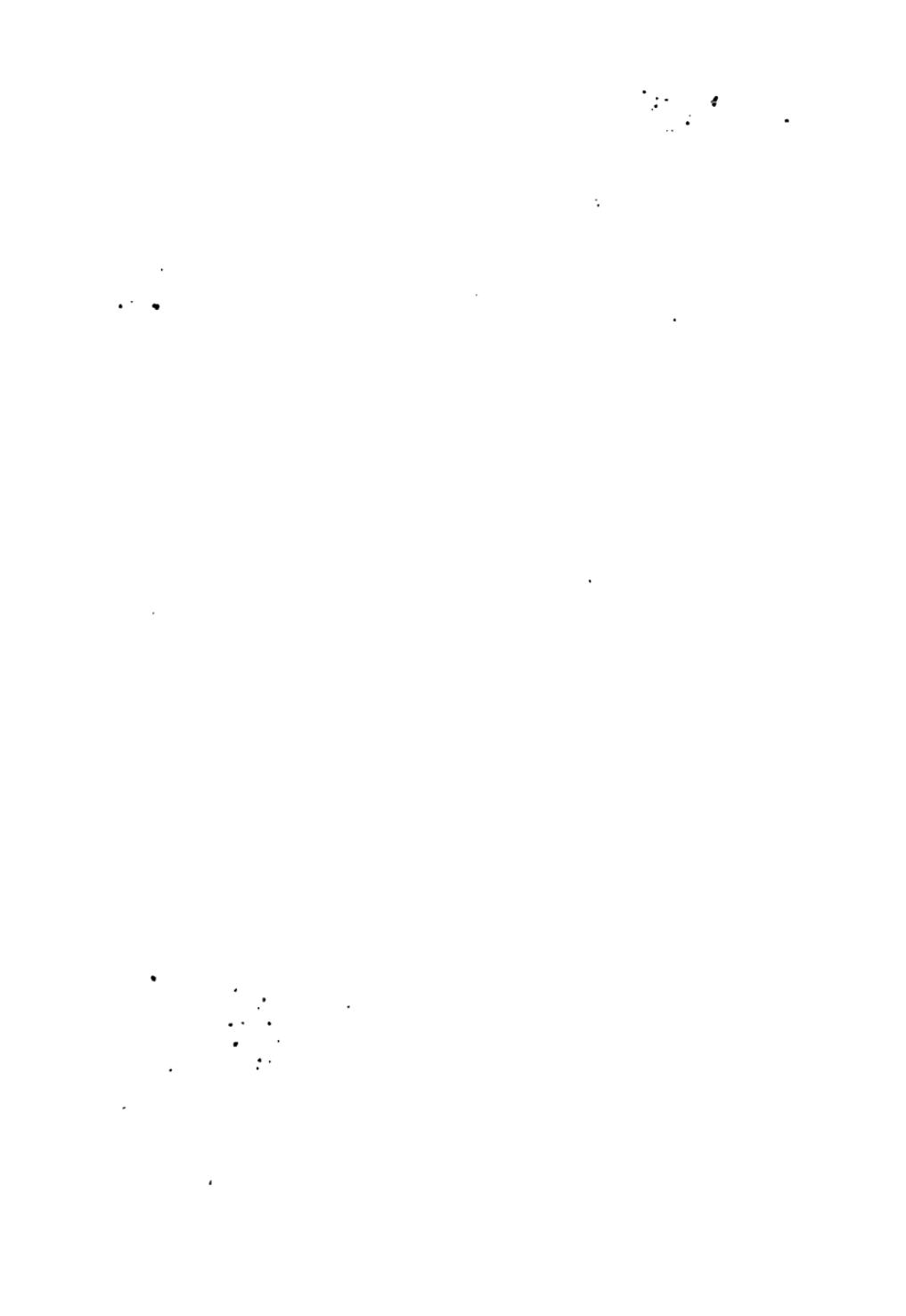
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THESE very creatures rapt Ezekiel saw  
Upbear the throne, when he by Chebar's stream  
Gat sights of God ; in them those cherubim  
He recognized, with whom God did withdraw  
To dwell in the Holiest place, that place of awe,  
Where never entered light of lamp nor beam  
Of day. They are the same who with the gleam  
Of flaming sword kept Eden, when God's law  
Our father brake, and o'er the sacred strand  
Was driven of God. And is it not foretold,  
That when the Church in utmost need shall stand,  
He who the heavens bow'd, and forth of old  
On cherub rode, once more shall bare His brand,  
And ride on cherub strong to save His fold ?

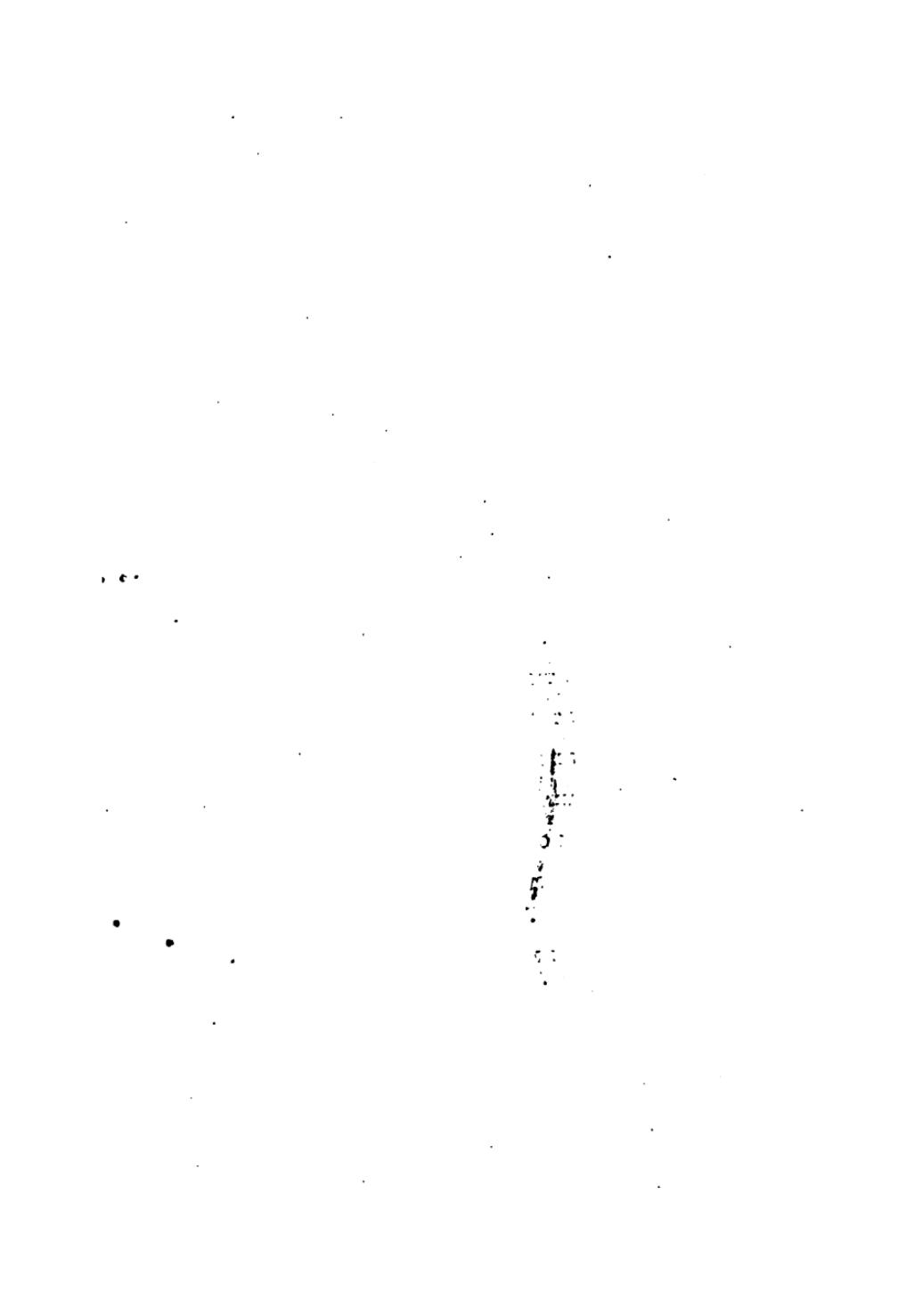
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## PREFACE.

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THE following chapters are the fruit of several years' study of the subject on which they bear. Yet they only touch its surface. There are depths below, which will be sounded in God's own time by ripe students of His Word.

My attention was first drawn to the subject by the Rev. H. Linton's *Text-papers* for 1859. My highest obligations are also due to Mr. George Smith's *Doctrine of the Cherubim*; and to the late Principal Fairbairn, for his acute and scholarly treatment of the topic in his *Typology of Scripture*.

I regret that I did not meet with Edward Irving's *Prophetic Works* (Edited by the Rev. Gavin Carlyle in 1870) till I was preparing the last chapter for the press. For patient and prayerful study of the symbol, and for eloquent and earnest exposition thereof, he stands unrivalled. Some valuable hints bearing on the link between

the Gospels and the Church are also to be found in the Rev. Isaac Williams' work *On the Apocalypse*

The Lord's people in all parts of the world have lately been drawn to desire greater courage, more sympathy, a complete self-surrender, and a higher spirituality. As they study the Lord's picture of His Church, they will perceive that all these gifts are laid up for them, and all linked on to the life of Christ within the believing soul. The subject of this volume is the mystery of life and the fulness thereof. It is the oneness of Christ and His Church.

Its key texts are these :

‘I LIVE; YET NOT I, BUT CHRIST LIVETH IN ME;’  
and,

‘THE CHURCH IS . . . THE FULNESS OF HIM THAT  
FILLETH ALL IN ALL.’

May the saints go forth to labour, to wait, and to witness, strengthened with His strength, and filled with His fulness!

June 30, 1875.

## *List of the Principal Works consulted in the Preparation of this Volume.*

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# THE CHURCH IN THE CHERUBIM.

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## INTRODUCTION.

‘These things were our types.’—1 *Cor.* x. 6.

THE Word of God is pervaded by picture-teaching from one end to the other. One set of pictures displays the force of natural affection, the working of tumultuous passions, or the triumph of sovereign grace. We see Cain, the son of the innocent, smitten by his parents’ fall till violence blossomed into a rod of cruelty, setting forth, a sad and swarthy wanderer, with his back on that Presence which alone can impart life and joy, and with his face directed to that Eastern sun-god which was the primal source of all that idolatrous corruption which has since infected our race. We are arrested by the moving mien of the pale Hebrew, who kept his loyalty to his God unspotted amid the splendours of an Egyptian court, as he descends from his cushioned chariot and lays aside his purple robe, to enter an inner chamber and drop a tear for Ben-

jamin, unseen by the obsequious crowd. Or the form of the stalwart Gideon is dimly caught across the moonlight, as—all unconscious of his iron might, and of the unflinching courage about to be conferred on him as soon as simple trust is called forth—he threshes wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. And lo! the angel appears, and addresses him with the astounding words, ‘The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.’ At another time a son of the desert is hurried away from his flocks and his sycamore fruit by a hidden impulse, and is transformed into a prophet that fears not the face of man. We can trace the angry lines on the face of Amaziah the priest of Bethel, as he quakes before the herdsman’s burning pictures, and cries to Amos, ‘O thou seer, go flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there: but prophesy not again any more at Bethel: for it is the king’s chapel, and it is the king’s court.’ The Word of God would have no response in the heart of man did it not abound with portraiture like these. For there are few whose lives are so prosaic as not to have had their monotony relieved by a touch of poetry, which gathers the remainder into a climax, and covers it either with pathos or with awe.

But Scripture abounds with imagery of another kind than that to which I have been alluding. Its foundations are inwrought with parables, as with precious stones; its gates are garnished with simili-

tudes, and its choicest characters are patterns for succeeding ages. Rightly to understand these types affords a clue to much that would else be dark and difficult on the sacred page. Tracing out the mazes by the aid of this scarlet thread, we can no longer suppose that any part of the Old Testament is practically useless, or that the various directions regarding the sacrifices and festivals of the Jews have no bearing upon us in the present dispensation. When we have this light to guide us, we know that the struggles and victories of the children of Israel have the closest parallel with ours. Christ is the Key of Knowledge ; and if we have right thoughts of Him, those portions of the books of Leviticus or Chronicles which appeared dreary and dark, when illuminated by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness will be changed into a field bristling with golden grain.

A pictorial or typical style of communicating truth was eminently suited to the early ages of the world's history. In the antediluvian period the strength of limb and muscle was gigantic, and the sweep of intellect was ponderous and mighty ; but the power to understand the things of God was feeble and infantine. At a time when printing was unknown, and when manuscripts were few and scarce, with what attention would such emblems be observed as the flaming sword, the lamb slain in the presence of the Lord, and the plucked olive-leaf in the dove's mouth ! Indeed, it seems as if this method of

teaching had been imprinted by a Divine hand alike upon the noble and the pilgrim, as though it had guided the counsels of the monarch upon the throne and shaped the visions of the captive in the dungeon. The dreams of the wise Hebrew and of the proud Egyptian king are all parables, which cannot be read without interpretation. The visions vouchsafed to Daniel and to Nebuchadnezzar regarding the kingdoms of the world assumed concrete forms or living shapes. Did Isaiah or Ezekiel paint the present or sketch the future with a view to the comfort of God's people, or as a warning to the scoffers? It was by comparing Israel to a vineyard or to an unfaithful bride, or by representing the princes of Judah, Assyria, or Egypt, under the figures of a young lion, an eagle, a cedar, or a whale. The use which our Blessed Lord made of this method of instruction we well know. But we must not suppose that His parables were framed for the benefit of the common people alone. Many of them were specially intended for the educated men among the chief priests and scribes. We know that this was the case with regard to the parables of the Door and the Shepherd, the Two Sons, the Husbandmen and the Vineyard, and several others. In the Bible we have a book full of pictures for the old and the young, for the wise and the unlearned, for the European as well as the Asiatic. And all are painted for one purpose. As Tyndale saith, Such allegories, similitudes, and examples, are meant

to open Christ, and the secrets of Christ hid in God, even unto the quick, and they can declare them more lively and sensibly than all the words of the world.'

One of the first questions which naturally occurs to us is, What are the chief topics of typical instruction brought before us in the Word of God? All the divisions of the subject we cannot exhaust; but what are the most prominent?

1. Most of the characters of the Old Testament were typical, both before and after the giving of the law. Adam is expressly stated in Rom. v. 14 to have been 'the figure of him that was to come.' In an especial sense Adam was a pattern-man, for in him the whole human race died; and in the Second Adam life and resurrection are brought to all that will receive them. Thus, in 1 Cor. xv. 45, 'the first man Adam' and 'the last Adam' are contrasted: the first was a 'living soul;' the last, 'a quickening spirit.' Melchisedec was a type, for 'after his similitude another priest ariseth, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.' (Heb. vii. 15, 16.) Abraham was 'the father of all them that believe,' because their faith is fashioned upon his model. Joshua is a type of Christ as the Conquering Saviour. David exhibits Him as the Shepherd-king of His people, feeding them as long as they journey through the wilderness. Solomon reveals the Prince of Peace

entering upon His millennial reign. There is a very striking passage in Zech. iii. 8, in which Joshua the high priest and his fellows are described as 'men wondered at.' The true meaning evidently is, 'They are typical, or representative men.' The word 'sign,' given in the margin of this text, is the same that we have in Isa. viii. 18: 'Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and wonders in Israel.' In fact, they are for types and patterns. So with Ezekiel: both in ch. xii. 11, and xxiv. 24, it is impressed upon the people, 'Ezekiel is "your sign" and pattern. His suffering and his acts are a figure and representation of yours.' In a very special sense Zerubbabel the chief governor, and Joshua the high priest of the captivity, were types of Him whose name is 'the Branch,' who, as 'the Priest upon his throne, builds the temple of the Lord.'

Nor is this usage confined to the Old Testament. St. Paul speaks of himself as a pattern-man in 1 Tim. i. 16: 'For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.' He was a pattern of Christ's saving power.

2. The next important division is the history of the children of Israel as a whole. This is clearly set before us in 1 Cor. x. 1-11. After mentioning several of the privileges, temptations, and defeats of

God's chosen people, the apostle adds, 'Now these things were our examples.' In the margin it is suggested, 'our figures,' and in the eleventh verse the same Greek word is rendered 'types,' which is the exact English equivalent of *τύπος*, from which it is derived. Special reference is made to the principal events which befell the Israelites in the wilderness ; their baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, their eating spiritual meat and drinking spiritual drink ; and afterwards, their idolatry, their temptation of Christ, and their murmuring, are mentioned. And all these are said to be our types. We may therefore safely conclude that all the history of the children of Israel was a model for us. Their blessings and sacraments, their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories, had all a spiritual meaning, and one which was specially intended for us. The Lord singled out one nation to be a pattern to all the rest, and whatever was done by Him in or for that nation became a beacon-light to shine into the farthest recesses of the world. The world that then was despised the scanty realm of Canaan, and knew but little of its prowess or its humiliation. It has been otherwise with the world since the spread of Christianity. The names of Abraham and Solomon and Josiah have long since been household words in every part of the civilized globe. But how little did they imagine how large was the audience before which they were rehearsing ! The Israelites who danced

around the golden calf in the midst of the isolated wilderness of Sinai never supposed that they had hundreds of millions for their spectators. Those who act their parts before two or three thousand gazers prepare them with the greatest care. Every look and movement and act is studied, with reference to the effect that will be produced by each on the hushed and listening crowd. But the children of Israel, as they marched on, printing the sand of the desert with marks to be effaced by the gentlest gale, were watched by the concentrated and continuous scrutiny of many succeeding centuries, as they peer over each others' heads in a mighty throng. Nor are we to suppose that only those events have a spiritual meaning which are singled out for special mention by St. Paul. They are evidently meant to be samples, to shew us that the whole history of Israel, both with reference to what has happened to it in the past, and what will be done for it in glorious days of the future, is typical of the Church of Christ. It is a setting-forth of God's dealings with His own redeemed ones. It exhibits that Church in every phase of conflict with the great adversary below, and it gives us a glimpse of the same after it has been endued with resurrection-glory.

3. The third great grouping of typical truth is to be found in the Levitical system of religious worship. All its rites and observances, its meats and its drinks, its holy days, and new moons, and

sabbaths, are said by St. Paul to be 'a shadow of things to come.' (Col. ii. 16, 17.) Those things are heavenly, and refer to Christ and His work; for the same apostle, in writing to the Hebrews (viii. 5), declares that the priests 'serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.' Indeed, the whole framework of the Tabernacle, with all its contents, services, offerings, and purifications, is expressly stated to have been planned and carried out for a typical purpose.

In the ninth chapter of this epistle the author mentions the ordinances of Divine service, and particularly the Tabernacle and its furniture, as 'a figure (or a parable) for the time then present.' As parts of this figure he specifies the candlestick, the table, and the shewbread, the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant with its contents. In verse 23 he terms all these 'patterns of things in the heavens;' and in the ensuing verse he declares that 'the holy places made with hands' are 'figures of the true.' When the priest offered the daily sacrifice morning and evening, he shewed forth the Lamb without blemish and without spot. Not a portion of his official dress could the high priest put on without exhibiting in fullest lustre that Great High Priest of the order of Melchisedec, who is consecrated for evermore. Does he approach the leper in order to heal? We see the sin-sick soul at the foot of Him who healeth all his diseases. Does he place the

bread in order upon the table? We see Christ offering Himself as the Living Bread which came down from heaven. Are the sins of the children of Israel confessed over the head of the scapegoat on the great day of Atonement? We see Christ, as the perfect Substitute, made sin for us though He knew no sin, so completely bearing our transgressions that they are forgotten as well as forgiven. Does Aaron burn sweet incense on the gold-covered altar? By faith we discern 'another Angel, offering much incense with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar before the throne,' and we do not doubt who that Angel is, for no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son. Do we gaze upon the seven-branched candlestick, with its ever ascending flame? We know that we are beholding a type of the perfect yet manifold Church of Christ, lighted by the presence and indwelling of that Spirit who takes of the things of Jesus and shews them unto us. The oftener our eyes light upon the Central Figure of the whole the more we are riveted. Those holy garments for glory and for beauty can only signify the spotless robe which the Lord Jesus wears, not to set forth His own essential dignity, but to indicate His character as Head of His Church. The names which Aaron bears upon his breast portray the names of Christ's loved ones, which are graven upon His heart; and the same names, when they were carved upon the onyx stones and fastened to the shoulders of

the high priest, reveal to us how unceasingly our Kinsman-Redeemer upholds His chosen people in all their necessities and cares. Where Jesus walks they also move, and His 'legs are like pillars of silver.' At each step we see 'the mystery of Christ,' which is the mystery of the Church, because He and His Church are one. Now, though that mystery 'in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, *as* it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit,' yet it was so plainly typified and foreshadowed in all the ritual ordained for Israel, as well as in all the history of that nation, that we should be blind indeed if we did not discern it. It was not so clear as now it is; then it was in shadow, now it is in sunlight.

4. We cannot fail to notice a most important class of typical manifestations which may be regarded as most intimately connected with the Levitical ritual, yet which may be traced to a much earlier period than the institution of the Mosaic economy. 'The cherubim of glory' are particularly alluded to by St. Paul in Heb. ix. 5, 9, as integral parts of a figurative system. Though he did not think it needful then 'to speak particularly' regarding their meaning, he has indicated to us plainly their character. This has been too often overlooked, that we know from Scripture they had a *figurative* bearing. They were instructive emblems. They bear upon the believer's present blessings and future prospects.

What, then, did they typify? It is the object of the ensuing pages to give an answer to this question. We need not remain in darkness or in doubt with regard to the solution of this difficulty. Abundant illustrative matter is to be found in the Scriptures of truth. The whole subject has been put aside by many of the Lord's people, because it has been supposed that every view which may be taken of the matter is, at best, hypothetical. I trust to be able to shew that complete certainty may be arrived at concerning the meaning of the type. Others, again, urge that it is merely a speculative topic, which has no bearing on the believer's duty. It is my desire to prove that it is one of the most practical studies in the Word of God, and that it abounds with fresh and fruitful thoughts regarding the privileges, the strength, and the victory, of the people of His choice. We shall find the blood-mark of purchase, the complete union of believers with their Head, their Resurrection-life, and the royal state which they share with Him who has made them kings and priests unto God, vividly portrayed and exhibited. We shall be led along one of the terraces of the Delectable Mountains, and with the telescope of faith shall be enabled to descry the delights the Lord is preparing for those that love Him. For does not St. Paul say regarding all the history which befell, and all the ceremonial which was appointed for the people of Israel, 'These things

were *our* types?' In a peculiar sense they were intended for us. We have more than 'the very image of the things' of which they were permitted to behold the shadow. 'The substance,' 'the better thing,' is ours; and thus we are enabled to understand the types and figures more clearly than they, for whose benefit they were first instituted. 'They are written for *our* admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.' The reference to us is not accidental, but appointed: not partial, but complete. The Israelites handed down the types, but we possess them. They are ours to handle, to appropriate, and to feed upon. May it please the Divine Spirit so to take away the veil from the eyes of His people, that they may discern 'the hid treasures of wisdom and knowledge' which are to be searched for and found in Christ! May they be drawn to feed on the sweetness of the honey that is hid in the Lion of the Tribe of Judah! And may many be attracted and awakened by the adoring attitude of the children of the kingdom, as, with faces averted from the world, and turned Zion-wards, they come up from the wilderness, leaning upon their Beloved!

## CHAPTER I.

### WHERE GOD DWELLS.

‘For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’—*Isaiah*, lvii. 15.

ALL the symbols of Scripture must have been instituted for our instruction. God could have had no other purpose in framing and revealing them, except to teach us what we could not otherwise know with respect to Himself, and His dispositions and purposes towards us. There is no truth about God in the Bible unconnected with His work for or in us. All of it bears on what He has done, or will do, for His redeemed people. It may safely be said that all the types which have hitherto been interpreted exhibit Christ as one with His Church, whether He be one with those who compose it in suffering, rising, and reigning, or one with them in the conflict with, and the victory over, the great adversary. For, as Mr. Krause has excellently said in his sermon on the Supremacy of Christ, there is ‘no Church without Christ, and no Christ without His Church.’ All

that has been recorded about the Lord Jesus is true of His people, for 'as he is, so are we in this world.'

Now, we find one series of symbolic representations older than any other, appearing for the first time at the very gate of Eden, just after the fall of man. If we gaze closely, we are convinced that it must have been communicated to the patriarchs as in some mysterious way connected with their worship and their hopes. We notice that it occurs again and again in the Tabernacle and the Temple, there delineated and constructed after a heavenly pattern, given by God Himself successively to Moses and to David: in fact, that it was the very centre round which the mysteries of the old dispensation revolved, the essence, core, and kernel of the whole. For did not the glory rest upon the cherubim in the Holy of Holies? We observe that the same emblems were represented to and described by Ezekiel in a new and magnificent vision for the comfort of the little remnant of Israel who were in captivity, and that, after a long interval, they were finally exhibited as singing the song of the redeemed in the Book of Revelation. The child of God, as he ponders over this beautiful succession of pictorial history, naturally concludes, 'There must be truth for me—truth which bears upon my present or my future, in all this gorgeous imagery. All must have been planned and revealed with a special purpose, in order to give me light on what I could not otherwise ascertain.' We

know that the whole Levitical system was full of types that set forth the Lord Jesus as the Redeemer and High Priest of His chosen people, and we ask, Can this wondrous portrayal of continuous and elaborate symbols be wholly unconnected with the good tidings of mercy to man? Has it no golden link to unite it with the gospel? Do we acknowledge that the later types were full of meaning, and can we except this, which was earlier than Moses, this, which was singled out for special mention by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, this, which St. John saw in Patmos long after the Old Covenant, by reason of age and decay, had been abolished? For there is no doubt that the cherubim at the gate of Eden, the golden, or carved, or embroidered representations in various parts of the Tabernacle or Temple, the living creatures of Ezekiel, and the 'beasts' of Revelation, constitute one and the same symbol. The marks of identity pervade the whole pictorial gallery, and unity in diversity is stamped upon all the chain.

The children of God should be encouraged to investigate the meaning of these symbols. The problem cannot be too difficult for solution. The key cannot be wholly lost. And even if there has been a period during which the majority of scriptural interpreters have missed the clue, we have good reason to expect that the Lord is restoring to us the power to discern and appropriate

the comforting truths which are enfolded therein. For do we not read in Rev. xi. 19, that after the sounding of the seventh angel's trumpet 'the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in heaven the ark of his testament?' And when the ark is seen, the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy-seat will also be discerned, and their meaning, previously recognised only by a few of its members, will be seen and acknowledged by the universal Church of Christ.

May the God of all truth and wisdom thus lead His people in these latter days to a clearer conception of these types, and a firmer grasp of the certainty of that teaching which He desires us to receive regarding them!

Now there are three points very clearly set forth in all the visions of the Cherubim. They are these:—First, that they manifest the dwelling-place of the Most High, for God is revealed as dwelling between the cherubim; secondly, that they exhibit His glory, for Ezekiel expressly says of the living creatures which he saw, 'this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord; ' and thirdly, that they represent mysterious beings in such close connexion with God that they may be regarded as one with Him, for the cherubim in the Tabernacle were made of the same piece of gold with the mercy-seat. We must keep these three thoughts very closely before us in all our examination of the

subject, the indwelling, the glory, and the oneness. And, in the next place, if we desire to obtain full, accurate, and undoubted information as to what God intended us to learn from these symbolic teachings, we must not restrict our view to the cherubic emblems alone, and seek to evolve their meaning by what they reveal of themselves. We must interrogate the rest of Scripture in order to obtain an answer to these three questions,—Where does Christ dwell? Upon whom does His glory rest? And, Who are one with Him?

By this means we shall arrive at an unerring solution of our doubts, and an unravelling of all our perplexities. If any other method be pursued, what I am about to advance will seem at best only a probable theory. The answers to these three questions will show that it is hardly possible to rest satisfied with any opinion but one,—that one conclusion alone meets all the necessities of the case, whether we investigate the analogy of Scripture for illustrative proof, or analyze the express revelations which God has been pleased to give us regarding this attractive and fascinating topic. Let us inquire what we find in Scripture regarding the dwelling-place of the Most High, either in express statements or in figurative passages.

I. One of the most explicit of the express passages is Isa. lvii. 15: 'For thus saith the high and *lofty* One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is

Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, *with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit.*' Notice this last clause. There are only two places where God dwells, 'the high and holy place,' and 'with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit.' This is confirmed by Exod. xxix. 45: 'And I will dwell among the children of Israel.' And it is very plainly stated in John, xiv. 23: 'Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' Just as the Father dwelt in Christ, so do the blessed Trinity dwell with him who has been led to receive God's love and to respond to it. They 'make their abode with him.' Again, in the 17th verse, Christ saith of the Spirit of truth, 'He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.' Another proof is given us in Rom. viii. 9: 'But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.' And there are several striking passages in the Epistles to the Corinthians. See 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17: 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.' Believers, then, are the temple of God, the spot where He peculiarly dwells. Oh what a wondrous truth is this, that the spirits of the broken-hearted are not transient resting-places for 'the Hope of Israel,' where He 'turneth aside to

tarry for a night,' but that they are abodes where the Spirit of Christ lives and reigns for ever !

Brethren in the Lord, 'the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you.' Yours is a life in which self is dead and Christ lives and works. You need not fear; your prayers are the breathings of the Spirit within you. So far as your prayers and praises are true at all, they are not yours, but the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Why should you quail before the enemy? If Christ abideth in you, and you in Him, whenever you realize this you will gain the victory. The life of Him who has conquered death and led captivity captive throbs within your veins. The life of Him who has ascended on high and received as His right a place 'far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,' is yours. How great the contrast! 'The High and Holy One' on the one hand, and 'he that is of a contrite and humble spirit' on the other. The Holy One does not despise the sinner: He purifies his heart, takes away his pride, and then dwells within him. Not merely is the spirit of the contrite His abode, but the body. We learn this from 1 Cor. vi. 19: 'What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?' Nay, verily we are not our own, if God has a threefold right

to us. We are His by creation, His by redemption, and His by sanctification. We belong to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God has a right to our whole being, spirit, soul, and body. And it is by the working and indwelling of the Holy Ghost that we are sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, set apart for God's service, and enabled to abide in Him. There is a special force in 2 Cor. vi. 16, inasmuch as it seems to denote that the collective body of believers make up 'the temple of the living God.' Some of the previous passages speak of every believer as a temple: this brings before us the great company of the faithful as composing 'the habitation of God through the Spirit.' The peculiar beauty of Ps. xxii. 3 should not be overlooked: 'Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.' We have then the Holy One on the one hand 'inhabiting eternity,' and on the other 'inhabiting the praises of Israel.' The two dwelling-places could not be more simply and yet powerfully contrasted. God could not *inhabit* the praises of His people unless He prompted them and spoke in them. No wonder 'the feeble folk' and despised are so mighty and so courageous, when the Lord of Hosts dwells and speaks within them, and gives them answers which all their adversaries are not able to gainsay nor resist. The true spirit and strength of prayer is described in the precious words of Rom. viii. 26, 27: 'We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself [rather, Himself]

maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.' The prayers of believers are therefore the mind of the Spirit, and whenever they are ruled by the same Spirit they are always according to the will of God. From 1 John, iv. 12 and 16, we are taught how closely this indwelling is associated with the spirit of love. It is 'he who dwelleth in love who dwelleth in God, and God in him.' Nothing but a glowing affection towards the Lord Jesus can make this tie firm and this fellowship abiding. Nothing but a freshly-kindled enthusiasm for His Name can maintain this constant victory.

We find, then, that God has only two dwelling-places alluded to in Scripture,—eternity, and the hearts of His people; or, if we vary the expression, the high and holy place, and the contrite spirit. If, therefore, the types of the Bible are *our* types, if they bear upon us and our privileges, the Scriptural emblems which strikingly portray the place where God dwells must typify the Church of Christ, which is composed of contrite believers. Indeed, we may advance a step farther, and observe that the only *persons* either in heaven or earth, with whom or in whom God is said peculiarly to dwell, are His ransomed ones, the sinners for whom Christ died. God is never revealed as dwelling with or in angels.

This may or may not be true, but it is not a topic of His inspired word.

And now we come to the type. In 1 Sam. iv. 4 we read of ‘the Lord of Hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubim.’ The same expression occurs in 2 Sam. vi. 2, and a very similar one in Ps. lxxx. 1. In Ps. xcix. 1 we read, ‘The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble; he sitteth between the cherubim.’ In all these passages the word ‘between’ is printed in italics in our version, and it does not occur in the original. Hebrew scholars are, therefore, of opinion, that the clause might be more correctly rendered, ‘The Lord of Hosts which inhabiteth the cherubim.’ There was then a Divine Presence in the cherubim. Thence Moses ‘heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of the testimony, from between the two cherubim.’ (Num. vii. 89.) On this part of our subject Mr. George Smith truly remarks: ‘The expression “dwelling” demonstrates that these figures could not have been intended to represent the Divine nature of the Persons of the Trinity. For, surely, the Scripture will not be supposed to teach that the Divine Presence inhabited Himself, or the symbol of Himself. Nor does this mode of description accord with any Scriptural doctrine respecting the holy angels. They were created pure, and have maintained their purity. They are, therefore, never spoken of as inhabited by the Deity, or as the

recipients of His indwelling Spirit. This is the ruling element of redemption. Man is thus raised from the ruins of the fall, and made meet for heavenly glory. This is, in fact, the great principle of the Gospel:—"Christ in you :" (Col. i. 27:) "Led by the Spirit :" (Rom. viii. 14:) "He is our life :" (Col. iii. 4.)\* Indeed, we shall not only find that the cherubim are connected with the Divine Presence and Inhabitation in the special texts I have quoted, but that they are always represented in the closest relation to God. They must have been typical, therefore, of those only with whom the Lord condescends to dwell. And they are His redeemed people.

II. This is, if possible, rendered more clear, and established on a firmer basis, when we examine the acknowledged types which are intimately connected with the subject.

1. The city of Jerusalem and the mountain of Zion are frequently used as figures of the holy people. When, in Ps. ii. 6, we read of 'My holy hill of Zion,' we are not to imagine that there was any inherent holiness in the stones of the mountain, or in the dust of the city. It was a figure of His Church, which is really holy, by virtue of the holiness He imputes and imparts to it. So in Ps. lxxvi. 2: 'In Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion.' We

\* *Doctrine of the Cherubim*, p. 95.

know that this signifies that the Lord abides in His Church. Salem, or the city of peace, is a type of 'the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.' Now, every part of that holy city is descriptive of the Church of Christ. In Rev. xxi. 9, 10, we read that the angel, when he was about to point out to St. John the holy Jerusalem, said, 'Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.' A previous chapter (Rev. xix. 7, 8) informs us exactly who the bride is. 'The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' The bride, therefore, must be the Church, which is composed of the saints, who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. In Eph. v. 23-33, there is a complete parallel drawn between Christ's love for the Church, for which He 'gave himself,' and which He 'loved even as himself,' and the love of every true husband for his wife. The same figure also occurs in 1 Cor. xi. 2, where St. Paul says to the Corinthians, 'I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.' It may be that we have a description in Rev. xxi. of the bright and glorious material abode which God is preparing for His people. But it is certain that we have therein an exact pictorial representation of Christ's Church. Indeed, His *Presence* with His people is the first truth

taught thereby. For St. John 'heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.' The holiness, happiness, glory and beauty, which will then characterize the Lord's ransomed people are next touched upon. And the harmony and compactness of the Church are shewn by the proportions of the city. And when we read that the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb were written upon the twelve foundations of the city, we are irresistibly reminded of Eph. ii. 19, 20, where we are taught, that those who are 'fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God,' 'are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.' We may not be quite sure, as it is beautifully expressed by the Rev. E. H. Bickersteth, whether these are 'real types or typical realities,' but we can have no doubt regarding their meaning. It may then be established that Jerusalem, or the holy city, is always a figure of the true Church of Christ. Illustrations of this abound in the Psalms, and other parts of the Old Testament. In Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14, we read: 'For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.' Now the Lord can find no rest in any temple but that which is built of living stones, much less can

He abide elsewhere ‘*for ever*.’ He can only say of those to whom He has manifested His love, ‘Here will I dwell; for I have a delight therein.’ (Prayer-book Version.) For He delights in those that fear Him, in those that put their trust in His mercy. (Ps. cxlvii. 11.) Indeed, in the 132nd Psalm we find precisely the same words which were used by Solomon at the end of his prayer at the dedication of the Temple: ‘Now, therefore, arise, O Lord God, into thy resting-place, thou, and the ark of thy strength.’ (2 Chron. vi. 41.) How sweet to know that, when Jesus passes by the proud and the mighty, He finds *rest* and satisfaction in the love which He draws forth from the hearts of those whom He has made to drink of the river of His pleasures! ‘He will rejoice over thee with joy; he will *rest in his love*, he will joy over thee with singing.’ (Zeph. iii. 17.)

2. It is, if possible, still clearer that both the Tabernacle and the Temple were types of Christ’s Church. The various names given to the Tabernacle in the Word of God bring this out very fully. ‘The House of God,’ or ‘The House of the Lord,’ is the simplest and most significant. It was under this name that the Tabernacle was frequently known in the days of the Judges. Hannah went up to the House of the Lord year by year. (1 Sam. i. 7.) Wherever the ark of the covenant was, whether at Shiloh or Jerusalem, there was the House of the

Lord. It is under one of these names that the Temple is almost always alluded to in the books of Kings and Chronicles. The word 'Temple' is of rare occurrence till the days of the Captivity. Both Tabernacle and Temple were 'Houses of the Lord,' or 'Dwelling-places' for Him. This was the first purpose God announced to Moses when He desired that they should construct a Tabernacle in the wilderness. See Exod. xxv. 8: 'And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.' The typical meaning of this is evident from Eph. ii. 21, 22: 'In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.' Believers then are the house, or habitation of God. And when God told Solomon to build the Temple, He meant to teach us truth regarding the 'spiritual house' which is built of 'lively stones.'

'The Tabernacle of Meeting,' or 'the Tent of Communion,' is another Scriptural expression. This is wrongly rendered in our version 'the Tabernacle of the Congregation.' The right translation has been shown by Parkhurst and Fairbairn to be undoubtedly 'meeting.' This is expressly taught us in Exod. xxix. 42-46: 'At the door of the tabernacle of the congregation [rather, of meeting] before the Lord: where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there will I meet with the children of Israel,

and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory.' Here the words rendered 'congregation' and 'meet' have the same root in Hebrew. So it is clear that this name was given to the Tabernacle, not because the people were gathered together and met there, but because the Lord *met* and manifested Himself to His people there. It was a type of His gracious communion with His ransomed ones. The only point at which God touches the world, in this His dispensation of grace, is His Church. *His own people* He meets, with them He communes; but with the world that lieth in the wicked one He has no fellowship. His message to those who wilfully continue in it is the same as that which was addressed by Elisha to Jehoram, king of Israel: 'As the Lord of Hosts liveth, before whom I stand, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.'

(2 Kings, iii. 14.)

A third name was 'the Tabernacle of Testimony,' or 'Tent of Witness.' (Num. i. 50, 53.) It was there that God testified of His purposes towards sinful man, that He would bring many sons unto glory. It was a witness of comfort to those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem, and a witness of warning to those that despised it. Everything in the Tabernacle testified of Christ. It contained the ark of the testimony, and in that were kept the tables of the testimony.

It may be regarded by some as a slight deviation from the exactness and beauty of this type, that in the Epistle to the Hebrews St. Paul appears to speak as if the Tabernacle typified heaven. Let us examine the passages in question. In Heb. viii. 2 we read that our High Priest is now 'a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.' What is that true tabernacle? Is it not 'the Church in the wilderness,' all whose sojournings are fixed by the Lord? For what others does Christ *minister* now? To say *here* that the Tabernacle means His literal body would be absurd; for how could Christ be a minister of any other but His mystical body? This must have been 'the greater and more perfect tabernacle' through which (διὰ) Jesus 'entered in once into the holy place.' (Heb. ix. 12.) Again, in the 23rd verse of the ninth chapter, it is not said that the holy places are 'patterns of the heavens,' but 'patterns of *things in the heavens*.' May we not, therefore, ever here regard the Tabernacle as a type of the Church of Christ, which, as it passes along this world, is nevertheless 'seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus?' (Eph. ii. 6.) This figurative method is followed out with great nicety and particularity throughout the New Testament. In Rev. iii. 12 the promise is given,—'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall no more go out.' In the true temple the Tabernacle.

stage will be past, and its members will never leave it. They may go from one mansion to another of their Father's house, but of the true spiritual fabric they are abiding inhabitants, citizens of that city whose Builder and Maker is God. (Heb. xi. 10.)

3. And now we come to a part of the Tabernacle to which greater importance was attached than to any other, and which evidently had the highest typical value. This was the Holy of Holies, and particularly the Ark and the Mercy-seat, to contain which the innermost shrine was constructed. This was fenced off from the Holy Place by the veil, and could only be approached once a year by the high priest alone. Moreover, blood must be sprinkled, and incense must be kindled, before even the representative of our Blessed Lord could enter thither. There were, therefore, two thoughts distinctly proclaimed to the worshipper as he listened and waited without,—the Presence of God, and Redemption. The Presence of God, for God promised to appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat upon the ark. (Lev. xvi. 2.) Redemption, because the name for the lid or cover of the ark was the mercy-seat or propitiatory. The word for it in Hebrew is Capporeth, or the Atonement-covering. That a third truth was intended to be taught thereby is evident from Exod. xxv. 21, 22. And this truth is Communion. 'And thou shalt put the mercy-seat above upon the ark, and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

And *there* I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.'

Now, if these three thoughts were closely connected with the Holy of Holies, and with the ark for which it was made, the same three truths must be intimately associated with the cherubim. For the cherubim were made of the same piece of gold as the mercy-seat. And the passage just quoted shows that this was the very part of the ark from which the voice of God proceeded—'from between the two cherubim.' We have also noticed already that the Presence of God is in a peculiar way linked with these symbols by such expressions as 'the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth between, or inhabiteth, the cherubim.'

What, then, is the conclusion to which we are irresistibly drawn by an examination of this part of our subject? First, we have observed a variety of passages in the Word of God in which it is distinctly stated that God dwells in His people; that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, make their abode in the hearts of contrite believers. We next noticed that almost all students of Scripture, who have examined the subject, agree that Jerusalem, Zion, Moriah, the Tabernacle, and the Temple, must be regarded as types of the Church of the ransomed.

Why is Jerusalem so apt a figure of the Church ? Because, after the rejection of Shiloh, it was the place God chose to put His name there. And if He dwelt in any part of the city, it was in Zion, and afterwards on Moriah. If He made any building in a peculiar sense His resting-place, was it not the Temple ? And if His presence abode in one part of that temple rather than another, was it not in the Holy of Holies ? If the glory was connected with any special article of furniture in the Holiest of all, was it not the Ark ? If the Shechinah appeared near any particular portion of it, was it not the Mercy-seat ? And if God inhabited any definite region of that Mercy-seat, the cherubim above it, which were made of the same piece of gold therewith, marked that spot. Whatever, therefore, Jerusalem, Zion, Moriah, the Tabernacle, the Temple, the Holy of Holies, the Ark, or the Mercy-seat typify, must be shadowed forth and symbolized in a still more intense and specific manner by the cherubim. All the others admittedly teach Jehovah's Presence with His Church, the redemption of that Church by the precious blood of Christ, and the fellowship the Lord is pleased to vouchsafe to His chosen ones. Now, can we stop short at the last link in this wondrous and intricate chain, and declare that it has no kind of connexion with all that preceded ? If we grant that every link, except the last and most important of all, clearly typifies truth regarding the redeemed, and then draw a hard and exclusive line, we throw

the whole system of Scripture typology into confusion. We are led, therefore, by two parallel lines of reasoning, both equally convincing, to accept the truth that the cherubim must typify the redeemed. And we cannot but feel surprise that so many Scriptural students admit that the type of redemption holds good as far as the very covering of the ark, which is termed the propitiatory, and then assert that the figures upon it were not emblems of the redeemed, but represent an order of beings that need no redemption.

How refreshing are these truths to those who know them by blessed experience! If you have taken God at His word, and received His perfect love into your heart, He dwells within you. When you pray, it is the Spirit that pleads. When you praise, it is the Spirit that triumphs. When you witness for your Master, it is the Spirit that speaks. Believers should often realize the promise in Mark, xiii. 11: 'Whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.' This union is not always close. The indwelling is not always realized. So St. Paul prays for the Ephesians, (iii. 17,) 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.' Christ did dwell within them already; but they needed to be 'rooted and grounded in love,' in order to cement the tie more firmly. We, too, want the riches of His glory to make us know the fulness of His love.

When no shadow rests upon our apprehension of the blessed truth, that Christ, 'having loved his own which were in the world, loves them even to the end,' then we understand what 'abiding in him' means. The Lord, by His Spirit, dwells in all believers. Yet His working is not equally evident in all. If there is any resistance to God's will, or any lack of self-surrender, then our prayers are hindered, and our praises will not rise. But the stronger the faith, the closer the indwelling. Those are the happiest Christians who let God work within them, and do not lift a straw in opposition to His will. It was of this that Jesus spake to those who were already His disciples, when He said, 'Abide in me, and I in you.' They had already *come* to Him, and bore *some* fruit. But He reminded them, that unless they *abode* in Him, and He in them, they could not bear *much* fruit, or have much power in prayer. It is such an abiding that will give us confidence before Him at His coming.

Nor should those who are now far off be disheartened. You may be brought nigh. You perhaps sometimes ask with Solomon, 'But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.' (1 Kings, viii. 27.) Yes, the Lord will dwell in the heart of the contrite. Many, who were once rebellious, have been subdued and softened. The Lord will heal your diseases, He will bind up your wounds, He will

sanctify your heart. Indeed, the Lord invites the lukewarm to accept His indwelling. For does He not say to the Laodicean Church?—‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.’ (Rev. iii. 20.) There is great hope in the words, ‘if any man.’ O will you not open the door? You shall then find that there is no heart so unclean that Jesus cannot cleanse and sprinkle it, and make it a fit dwelling-place for Himself.

## CHAPTER II.

### WHERE CHRIST'S GLORY RESTS.

'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them.'  
*John, xvii. 22.*

EVERY mention of the cherubim in Scripture is closely connected with the glory of the Lord. So intimate was this union, that in Heb. ix. 5, St. Paul terms them 'the cherubim of glory.' We have the fullest and most magnificent description of these wondrous symbols in the first and tenth chapters of the prophet Ezekiel. Here they appear instinct with life, mighty in intellect, and endowed with singular rapidity of movement. In the 28th verse of the first chapter the vision is thus summed up: 'This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.' So wherever the cherubim are the glory rests. In the ensuing chapters of Ezekiel the glory is frequently mentioned. In the eighth chapter, 3rd and 4th verses, the prophet describes how he was taken 'in the visions of God to Jerusalem,' and saw the same 'glory of the God of Israel' there, which he had seen in vision in the

plain of Chebar. And it is evident that though the scene of the vision was altered, the glory was still connected with the cherubim; for in ch. ix. 3 we read:—‘And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house.’ The term ‘cherub’ is evidently here used for the compact vision of the living creatures, united yet manifold. Both the singular and plural occur in the 20th verse of the tenth chapter: ‘This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubim.’ ‘The house’ alluded to is ‘the house of the Lord.’ In the tenth chapter we read (v. 4); ‘the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord’s glory.’ After a while (v. 18) ‘the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.’ So then in this vision two resting-places for the glory of the Lord are brought to our view, the living cherubim and the house of the Lord. And when we remember that the glory always rested above the carved cherubim within the Temple, we perceive that there is a coincidence in the type. Whether the cherubim were palpable or impalpable, lively in vision or golden in reality, they were still cherubim of glory. If we wish then to explain the symbol we must examine the word of God in order to discover where Christ’s glory rests. There, and there alone,

shall we see the glory resting on the face of Jesus Christ unerringly reflected.

We will first investigate the meaning of this expression, 'glory,' and trace the progress and manifestations of the glory of the Lord Jesus.

And secondly, we shall notice upon whom in a peculiar and emphatic sense it is said that this glory of the Lord rests. And may the ascended Saviour grant us the fulness of wisdom and knowledge, to know the things which are freely given to us of God.

1. The meaning of the word 'glory' seems to be a dazzling brightness, above that of the noonday sun, in which the Lord Jesus revealed Himself from time to time, either in the fashion of a man or of an angel, or at other times in a cloud from which a voice was heard. This was the glory which the Son had with the Father before the world was. (John, xvii. 5.) Into the same Christ has now returned. For we gather from 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16, that 'the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto;' or rather, 'in light unapproachable.' No man hath seen it or can see it yet, until he puts on the glorified body and thus becomes like unto his Master: it is a light to which no man can draw near. Even when they saw this glory only in vision, Daniel the holy and John the beloved fainted away. It was thus that Christ revealed Himself to Moses, for He is

'the Angel of the Lord who appeared to him in a flame of fire ~~out of~~ the midst of the bush.' 'The Lord went before the Israelites by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to ~~give~~ them light.' (Exod. xiii. 21.) There was a similar appearance on the top of Mount Sinai, during the delivery of the Law. 'And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the ~~eyes~~ of the children of Israel.' (Exod. xxiv. 17.)

It is a very remarkable circumstance that the Tabernacle is mentioned in the thirty-third chapter of Exodus, before the Tabernacle was constructed of which God gave Moses the pattern in the Mount. For the directions to make the permanent Tabernacle were not given by Moses to the children of Israel till the thirty-fifth chapter. And yet that Tabernacle, which previously existed, was the magnetic centre of the Presence, the Communion, and the Glory. For we read in chap. xxxiii. 7, 'And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and called it the Tabernacle of the congregation. [Rather, the Tabernacle of communion]. And it came to pass, that every one which sought the Lord went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation, which was without the camp.' The 9th verse records the glory. 'And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door o

the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.' Here it will be observed, that the words, 'the Lord,' are in Italics, and do not occur in the original. Thus it might be rendered ; 'the cloudy pillar talked with Moses,' for the Lord dwelt therein. So we have here the indwelling of the Most High, His fellowship with Moses, for He 'spake unto him face to face,' (v. 11,) and the manifested glory.

This same brightness made Moses' face to shine, when he had seen it for forty privileged days lighting up the perfect law with an unearthly brilliancy. This glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle within, and the cloud covered it without, as soon as the permanent tabernacle was finished, and as long as the Lord purposed that the children of Israel should encamp in any particular spot. (Exod. xl. 34-38.) In like manner, when Solomon's Temple was finished, and the ark of the covenant brought in beneath the colossal cherubim of olive-wood, 'it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud : for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.' (1 Kings, viii. 10, 11.) What became of the ark when Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem we know not. But Haggai predicted that even in the second temple there should be a glory, and that 'the glory of the latter house should be greater than of the former.' (Hag. ii. 9.)

And even if no visible radiance shone from the innermost shrine of that beauteous structure, do we not know that in the miracles wrought therein, and the loving words spoken there, the disciples were enabled to 'behold the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ?'

Now in several of the passages of the Old Testament where the glory is mentioned, the word given in the Chaldee Targums, or paraphrases of the Hebrew text, is Shechinah. For example, Exod. xxv. 8, is thus rendered : 'I will make my Shechinah to dwell among them.' Hence this expression has made its way among ourselves to denote 'the glory of the presence.' Its root is the same as that from which 'mishcan,' the word for tabernacle, is derived. Buxtorf defines 'Shechinah' to mean 'habitation with a dominant reference to the Divine glory in its outward visible manifestation.' This shows us the prevailing opinion among the Jews with regard to the glory. They regarded it as a glory abiding among men. This truth is also corroborated by Ps. xxvi. 8, 'Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth,' or, according to the margin, 'the place of the tabernacle of thy glory.' The habitation of God, and His glory, are the thoughts here very closely connected. And it is plain from all these passages that the glory was not manifested in any transient or occasional manner, but that it always *abode* with the

children of Israel. For, whenever its first appearance took place, whether in the Tabernacle or without it, in the time of the patriarchs or after the giving of the Law, it was known as the Shechinah, or *ndicelling* glory.

It will strengthen our position if we call to mind that most of the manifestations were identified with the ark of the covenant, where the cherubim were. 'hinehas' wife named her child 'Ichabod,' or 'Where is the glory?' 'saying, the glory is departed from Israel, because the ark of God was taken.' (1 Sam. v. 21, 22.) It is evident that this incident is described in the seventy-eighth Psalm, verse 61, when it is said that God 'delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.' And it is most probable that St. Paul refers to this in Rom. ix. 4, where he declares of the Israelites, 'to whom per-aineth the glory.'

Of all this glory Christ stripped Himself when He came into the world. He emptied Himself, as he exact Greek of Phil. ii. 7 intimates, of the greatness which was His right, and of all its outward accompaniments, that He might 'take upon him the form of a servant, and be found in the likeness of men.' Glory had been His with His Father before the world was. In glory He had spoken to Moses, and to Samuel, and to David. But seeing 'in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren,' He must needs be

like them in His weakness and His humiliation. Yet even when He walked the earth as a wayworn wanderer, His 'visage more marred than any man,' some rays of the glory would stream through the veil. For did not the chosen three see 'his face shine as the sun, and his raiment white as the light,' when they were with Him on the holy mount? Then, St. Peter tells us, 'he received from the Father honour and glory, when there came a voice to him from the excellent glory.' (2 Pet. i. 17.) And though this was but a transient glimpse of 'the glory that excelleth,' yet the majesty of His countenance and the marvel of His deeds must have always exhibited 'glory full of grace and truth.' Before His betrayal and crucifixion, our blessed Lord prayed that He might re-enter this brightness. 'And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.' (John, xvii. 5.) And we know that this prayer has been answered. For when Stephen 'looked up stedfastly into heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.' (Acts, vii. 55.) He has returned to the greatness of which He spoke in John, xiv. 28. And this is the real clue to this text, so often misunderstood. 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.' Our Lord's meaning here evidently was, 'I have put off for a short season the greatness and the glory

I had with the Father before the foundation of the world. But I expect shortly to return to the Father and to put on again that greatness which belongs both to Himself and to me. And so, if you loved me, you ought to rejoice that my humiliation is almost past, and my glory is near ; that my short-lived littleness is nearly over, and that my eternal greatness will shortly begin. I have been "for a little while lower than the angels." Soon all things will be put in subjection under my feet. I shall be set far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.'

2. We have now briefly sketched some of the manifestations of the glory of the Lord Jesus. We must next inquire whether that glory is entirely His own ; or, if He shares it with any created beings, who they are, and by what marks they are to be recognized. On this point the Word of God does not leave us in ignorance.

There are, first, figurative passages which shew upon whom that glory shines. Isa. lx. 1, 2, is a striking example, where Israel is thus addressed : 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people : but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.' Now Israel

exhibits to us the true Church of Christ. Not merely upon the literal Israel, but on the spiritual shall the glory of the Lord arise. Though the Church has no brightness of her own, she becomes brilliant with the reflected lustre of Him who is come a light into the world. A similar promise is given to Jerusalem in Zech. ii. 5 : 'For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.' That the true Jerusalem is meant is very clear when we examine the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Revelation, where we read that John 'saw that great city, the holy Jerusalem, having the glory of God.' And we know this city is identified with 'the bride, the Lamb's wife.' It portrays the brightness and beauty of all the ransomed.

We shall find portions of God's Word still more explicit and unmistakable than any of these. What can be plainer than John, xvii. 22 ? Jesus had prayed to His Father to glorify Him, and knowing that His prayer was answered, He exclaims 'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them.' Of whom does He speak ? Of all His, or those whom He terms 'the men which thou gavest me out of the world ;' and also 'them which shall believe on me through their word.' He means the whole of His mystical body ; all that ever were, or will be, His. Of these He has purposed what He announces. 'The glory which thou gavest me I have given them : that they may be one, even a

we are one.' Not that they may be one visible unity, but one spiritual whole; members of the one body of which Christ is the Head. This is what Hannah believed, as we see from 1 Sam. ii. 8: 'He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.' The Lord finds us grovelling in the dust of sin and folly, without true riches. What a change He works in us by the power of His Spirit! He not only washes and pardons us, but He also glorifies us, and sets us on thrones. This is the purpose of our sovereign God, to make us kings and princes to Himself. And then that glory is His own. And He is so closely joined to His people that every blessing which lights on them He regards as received by Himself. Thus He tells us in John, xvii. 10, 'I am glorified in them.' When His people are glorified, Jesus is glorified too, for He is one with them. This will be made manifest hereafter. For when He 'is revealed from heaven,' 'he shall come to be glorified in his saints.' (2 Thess. i. 10.) And when the bodies of our humiliation are fashioned like unto the body of His glory, Christ will be glorified, for His members and He make a perfect whole. These are passages which require the deepest prayerful study, before their full meaning is apprehended.

There is a sense in which glory rests upon Christ's people even now. The old covenant, though

it was the ministration of death, was glorious. ~~B~~ut the gospel exceeds the law in glory, for it is ~~the~~ ministration of life and righteousness. Christ's glory is plainly reflected therein, and the saints of God need no veil as they gaze into the glass of His Word. So transforming is the sight of the King in His beauty, which they find there revealed to the eye of soaring faith, that they rise from one measure of glory to another, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Nothing is so bright as holiness, and no object so brilliant as the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He is discerned by faith. Yet it is the coming of our Saviour to which we chiefly look forward:—the time when He shall be revealed in power and majesty. For 'when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.' (Col. iii. 4.) To be with Christ in glory is the end of all our hopes, and will be the fulfilment of all our desires. Here, sorrow, and sickness, and temptation, sometimes shut out all but a transient glimpse of the brightness. Only a felt sense of the power of the Redeemer remains, to which the trembling soul hangs on. At such a period St. Paul's thoughtful comparison brings relief: 'I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.' (Rom. viii. 18.) Now are we the sons of God. But we are not *manifested* as such; the world cannot see

the Divine stamp ; and we are sadly conscious that complete redemption has not yet been granted. So with eager, earnest longing, we wait for the time when the bondage shall be wholly shaken off, and the liberty of the glory, put on, and when we, who have received power to become the sons of God, shall be clothed in the likeness of our glorified Kinsman-redemer to all eternity.

Such passages as have been quoted might be multiplied almost indefinitely ; and they all prove that in God's purposes His glory is granted to His believing people. Some rays of it have lighted upon them here, and its full radiance will be theirs hereafter. If you look out the word 'glory' in a Concordance, you will find a great many texts which mention it in close connexion with Christ's Church. There are very few which speak of it with reference to angels. Our Blessed Lord does indeed say that 'the Son of Man shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.' (Luke, 26.) And there are passages which describe angels as arrayed in bright and shining garments. We cannot indeed doubt that those happy beings who stand in the immediate presence of God share His glory, and shine with the lustre that rays forth from the throne. And therefore, as it is a matter of no uncertainty, we find it rarely alluded to in scripture. But we hear much of the glory which the Lord's people will inherit, because this is still

future, and because it cheers the heart of the fainting disciple to be assured of what he could never have known, had it not been revealed, as what, by reason of his blindness and unbelief, he was too prone to forget. The clear statements of the Word of God reveal to him his share of the glory, and he learns it just as plainly from the types, soon as he sees that all these emblems were specially framed in order to communicate *truth about the Lord's people*, and truth which was unknown before. They all bear upon 'the mystery of God,' and this mystery is 'the mystery of Christ,' and the mystery of redemption. (Col. ii. 2. Eph. iii. 4.) The unfolding of this hidden wealth displays to the believer his present possession, and his future heritage. It is for this reason that the link between the saint and the glory is so frequent and fertile a topic in the Word of God. And even if angels who excel in strength excel in glory too, there is a point they cannot reach. For wondrous is what we hear the Master say even to lukewarm Laodicean Christians. 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and was set down with my Father on his throne.' (Rev. 21.) Only conquerors share the kingship. 'So differeth from star in glory.'

And so, however rich the portion of those joyful spirits who have never known sin, what is granted to the Church of the first-born has a peculiar an-

unparalleled lustre. It is our humanity that the Lord Jesus now wears upon the throne. 'For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.' (Heb. ii. 16.) Christ is therefore one with His redeemed. He was 'in all things made like unto *His brethren*.' He was one with them in suffering and prayer, and they shall be one with Him in glory. This oneness angels never shared; they are not, like His saints, members of Christ. He put on all our poverty, that He might shower down upon us all His riches. And thus the second link in this oneness is accomplished, that by these promises He has given us 'we might be partakers of the Divine nature.' (2 Pet. i. 4.) Wondrous truth! which few of the saints of the Lord realize, that nothing less than *a partaking of the Divine nature* is our privilege and our possession. And if so, then ours is part of the same honour and glory which St. Peter tells us in the same chapter, Jesus Christ 'received from the Father.' He needed not to *receive* it for Himself, for long since glory belonged to Him. It was only as our Head, as the glorified God-Man, that He received the glory to pass it on to us.

These thoughts are not devoid of comfort and instruction. Let us notice how it bears upon ourselves.

This glory is not fully revealed yet. It is the purpose of our Head to '*bring* many sons to glory.'

How beautiful is this description of our pilgrim state ! As we travel along the wilderness, with scorpions, its drought, and its famine, we are *but brought to glory*. And our journey, spite of its sufferings and its falls, its darkness and its twilight, nothing more than a path to glory. Our Father though we see Him not, is bringing us along it, : He counts us as sons. It is this that St. Paul who have the Ephesian saints study : 'The eyes of y understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' (Eph. 1. 18.) It is upon this that our eye is to be fixed but though all the Lord's ransomed ones know something of the glory, it is only those who live in close communion with their Master, and who are specially enlightened, who discern the *riches* of that glory. The more we receive the fulness of Christ's life here, and the more we realize the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, the clearer will our perception of the wealth, variety, and height of the coming glory. If we wish to feed upon the truths, ours must be a resurrection-life. We must be 'planted together in the likeness of Christ's resurrection.' We must be 'quickened together with Christ.' For if these types represent not so much the saints as they are, as the saints as they shall be, it is only in a resurrection-spirit that they can be read. How clearly is this brought before us in

story of the Transfiguration given us by St. Luke, (ix. 32.) The three chosen disciples were for a season so heavy with sleep that they could not tell what was going on around them. But 'when they were awake, they saw his glory.' So with us; while our souls cleave to the dust, we cannot perceive the brightness which is streaming down upon our stony souls. It is only when we awake that we see the glory. The connexion between awaking and the resurrection is very striking in several prophecies. Peter and his two companions were charged to 'tell the vision to no man, till the Son of Man was risen again from the dead.' (Matt. xvii. 9.) Does not this show that it was only in a resurrection-spirit that the vision of the glory could be believed or understood? Before an eminently cherubic vision was granted to Zechariah he too was wakened by the angel, 'as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.' But as this waking was all part of the vision, we conclude that its full import will not be understood till the resurrection of the body. We must not forget to observe that a partial glorification is granted to the saints in the intermediate state. For Moses and Elijah, one of whom had certainly put off the body, 'appeared in glory,' when they spake with their Master of the 'decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.' (Luke, ix. 31.)

2. Christ's glory is not complete without the full

salvation of His Church. And so it is prophesied of our King in Ps. xxi. 5, 'His glory is great in thy salvation.' The glory of which all the prophets speak is the glory of saving souls. It is not the original and essential glory which He had from all eternity that is here pointed out; it is the glory of God's salvation. This is what is meant when we read in Isa. xxii. 24, 'They shall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's house.' All the glory of saving the sons who make up the Father's house must be hung upon Christ. None can be ascribed to any human instrumentality. His glory is great in God's salvation, and when the last of the elect has been gathered in that glory will be complete. The Christ hath many members; and as suffering and glory were linked together in one Head, so will it be with those who are His. Our Master's experience and ours are blended in an everlasting harmony. The Church has been for a season black as the tents of Kedar through her sorrow and her sin, but even now she is comely as the curtains of Solomon; and hereafter Christ will present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. For a little while Jesus suffered the dark shadow of the sin He bore to rest upon Him, and thus obscure the glory. But all this tribulation is over now. He has entered into the joy. And when we put off these bodies of our humiliation we shall be fashioned like unto the body of His glory.

(Philip. iii. 21.) *Then shall He see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.*

3. With so ravishing a prospect before them, what is the duty of those that are Christ's? It is to hear and obey, when those stirring accents sound in their ears, 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come.' When our light has come, we need not abide in darkness. When the glory of the Lord has risen upon us, we must arise from our slumbers, and go forth to testify for our Master. We must tell our neighbours the great things the Lord has done for us. Dull and earthy as we are in ourselves, if we only receive and transmit the light, it will guide many a wayfarer. 'Awake, awake, put on thy strength.' 'Shake thyself from the dust.' If we, too, like Zion, put on the strength which is laid up for us, and the beautiful garments which are offered to us, the Lord will grant us victory, and enable us to speak of the grace which we have, and of the glory which shall follow. What we need is to shake off entirely the dust of sin and earthliness, and to surrender our whole hearts to our Redeemer. Thus we shall understand the meaning of the promise, 'Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.' (Ps. lxviii. 13.) The bondage and the anguish of Egypt shall pass away. The saints shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall be like the doves that fly to the windows

of their long-lost home. Bright will be the colour of these ransomed ones as they mount heavenward. And when their Head ascends on high for the second time, they, too, caught up to meet Him in the air, shall rise upwards on a cloud to their haven of rest, and so be for ever with the Lord.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE GOSPEL AT THE GATE OF EDEN.

‘He placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.’—*Gen. iii. 24.*

Two points in our inquiry have now been illustrated and proved. The two premises from which we started were these: That God dwelleth in (or inhabiteth) the cherubim, and that these symbols typify ‘the likeness of the appearance of the glory of the Lord.’ And we have been led by examination of a great variety of passages to acknowledge, that both these definitions are suggestive of facts which are only true of the Church of Christ. It is in believers alone that God dwells, and the saints only shall share Christ’s glory. We also glanced at the revealed truth, that the redeemed only are one with Christ. As therefore the cherubim typify those who are in close union with Christ, the convincing proof accumulates that these symbols must be typical of Christ’s Church. We now come to the first mention of these emblematic appearances in Scripture. As soon as Adam and his wife had

been driven out of Eden, God placed the cherubim at the east of the garden.

Let us inquire :—

I. What these symbols were like, and whether this was a transitory or a permanent revelation.

II. What was typified and taught by this manifestation of the Lord's glory to the patriarchs.

I. If we wish to know what this appearance resembled, our first duty will be to translate the passage rightly. Scholars like Parkhurst and Fairbairn assure us that it should be rendered, 'He caused to dwell as in a tabernacle the cherubim.' And there is no doubt that they are right. The omission of the article greatly tends to confuse the sense. But if they are termed '*the* cherubim,' it is clearly intimated that they were the same cherubim which were known in their essential features by those for whom Moses wrote.

The words rendered, 'a flaming sword which turned every way,' some would translate 'the self-infolding fire of wrath;' and the participle is certainly extremely similar to that which we find in the description of the glory which surrounded the living creatures in Ezek. i. 4. There Ezekiel saw a whirlwind, a great cloud, 'and a fire infolding itself.' The marginal reading suggests 'catching itself.' But although there seems no sufficient reason to translate 'cherev' anything else but

'sword,' the words 'every way' should undoubtedly be omitted. The passage then reads: 'So he drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he caused to dwell in a tabernacle the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned itself to keep the way of the tree of life.' It was not the cherubim themselves who kept the way of the tree of life, but rather the glory which hovered above them in the semblance of a flaming sword. This deterred men from attempting to re-enter paradise till the appointed time.

What, then, were 'the cherubim' like? There is no mention of their shape in Genesis. It must be gathered from other portions of the Word of God. When Moses was commanded by God to make two cherubim of gold of the matter of the mercy-seat, (Exod. xxv. 18,) it is taken for granted that their forms were known; and it is only incidentally that we gather that they had faces and wings. But in the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel a full description of their appearance is given us. 'Out of the midst thereof [*i. e.* of the fire] came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.' 'As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man and the face of a lion on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face

of an eagle.' (Ezek. i. 5, 10.) The detailed delineation of the vision in which the cherubim were the most prominent features occupies the whole of both these chapters, which must be carefully studied by all who desire to know what those symbols resembled. Next to that glory which was the very atmosphere in which they were bathed, we must observe their humanity. They had the likeness of a man, and the hand of a man. The human nature is most distinctly revealed. Another ruling idea, which underlies the whole, is that of *life in its highest conceivable development*. They are called 'living creatures,' and once this expression in the singular is used for the composite vision. 'This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel, by the river of Chebar;' and it is added, 'I know that they were the cherubim.' (Ezek. x. 20.) This word, 'cherub,' seems to be first used of them in chapter ix. 3, and in the tenth it frequently recurs. So when we connect these two ideas, we have man in the highest development of natural and spiritual life, and next, that life enjoyed in glory. Indeed, whether we dwell upon the swiftness of these living creatures, their multiplicity of eyes, their many-sidedness, or their resemblance to the strongest animals, we have *life* brought before us in a variety of aspects, and all transcending what we know of existence in this lower sphere. Nor can we doubt that the same symbol is brought before us in

the Book of Revelation. ‘The four beasts full of eyes before and behind’ should undoubtedly be termed ‘living creatures,’ for that is the exact rendering of the Greek ζῷα, just as it is of the Hebrew חַיּוֹת. And though some of the details vary, the essence remains the same. The differences are trifling, the identity is real and abiding.

We are not to conclude that it was absolutely essential to the idea of a cherub that there must always be four faces represented, although this was its completest and most perfect form. In the description of the restored Temple, given in Ezek. xli. 18-20, we read with regard to its walls and galleries: ‘And it was made with cherubim and palm-trees, so that a palm-tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had two faces; so that the face of a man was toward the palm-tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm-tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about.’ So wherever the cherub was graven or worked upon a flat surface it had two faces only, those of a lion and man. This may be called the coupled cherub, and reminds us of Him who was the Lion of the tribe of Judah as well as the Man of sorrows; for He united the strength of the lion with the tenderness of the man. And we can hardly doubt that ‘the cherubim of cunning or embroidered work’ which adorned the curtains of the tabernacle, and the veil

which fenced off the Holy of Holies, (Exod. xxvi. 1, 31,) had precisely the same appearance. The same shape must have characterised the 'carved figures of cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers' with which the walls of Solomon's Temple were decorated, and its olive-wood doors. (See 1 Kings, vi. 29, 32, 35.) And the cherubim wrought upon the veil which Solomon made must have announced the same truth.

That the symbolic appearances which seemed to be connected with a tabernacle at the gate of Eden were substantially the same as these later revelations can hardly be doubted by any one who thoroughly examines the passages. Whether they had four faces or two we know not; but they must have exhibited some cardinal identity with those living creatures of which Ezekiel says, 'I knew that they were the cherubim.' For this particular expression, with the definite article, would not be chosen by the Spirit of God if there were any possibility of the student of God's Word being beguiled thereby. And as Ezekiel was a priest, there is every reason to believe that he recognized the general features of the cherubim in the Temple. For, if he had never seen those on the mercy-seat, the carvings or embroideries on the veil and the doors must have been perfectly familiar to him.

It is a very remarkable fact that the Assyrians, Persians, and other nations of antiquity, frequently

represented in their sculptures human-headed bulls and lions, together with similar combinations, at the gates of their palaces. Some of these symbolic creatures are portrayed in close contiguity to a sacred tree. A great variety of such representations were found at Nineveh, and they are now to be seen and studied at the British Museum. All these must have sprung from vague recollections of the cherubim as revealed to the patriarchs. They evidently had a common source, however great the perversions that have been introduced. And if this conclusion be forced upon us, it is certain that the emblems which were made to tabernacle at the gate of Eden must have had an essential unity of form with those traced upon the walls and carved on the mercy-seat of the Temple. And this is strongly corroborated by historic memorials still in existence. The author of an Apocalyptic book written before the Christian era (the Wisdom of Solomon), says: 'Thou hast commanded me to build a temple upon thy holy mount, and an altar in the city where thou dwellest, a resemblance of the holy tabernacle which thou hast prepared from the beginning.\*

The writer of this is personating Solomon when about to build the Temple. In the ancient Jewish Targums, or Paraphrases of Scripture, we have such ample confirmation of my position, that no one

\* Wisdom of Solomon, ix. 8.

who reads the extracts can doubt what was the traditional belief of the devout Hebrews regarding these manifestations of the glory, and *their continuance in the Church of the patriarchs.*

The Jerusalem Targum has the following paraphrase of Gen. iii. 24: 'And He expelled Adam, and caused to reside the splendour of His Shechinah from the beginning at the east of the garden of Eden, above the two cherubim. Two thousand years before the world was created, He created the law, and prepared Gehinnom [Hell] and Gan Eden [Paradise]. He prepared Gan Eden [*i. e.* the garden of Eden] for the righteous, that they may eat and delight in the fruits of the tree, because they kept the commandments of the law in this world; and prepared Gehinnom for the wicked, for it is like unto a sharp sword that eats from both sides: He has prepared within it sparks of light and coals which consume the wicked, to punish them in the future world for their not having kept the commandments of the law. For the tree of life, that is the law; whosoever keeps it in this world, he will live and last like the tree of life: good is the law to whomsoever keeps it in this world, like the fruit of the tree of life in the world to come.' The paraphrase of Jonathan Ben-Uzziel on the same is very similar. The earlier portion of it is as follows: 'And He drove out Adam from where He had made to reside the glory of His Shechinah from the

beginning between the two cherubim.' The late Emmanuel Deutsch, whose translation we have adopted,\* doubts whether either of these Targums is older than the seventh century after Christ. Some have, indeed, supposed that Jonathan Ben Uzziel lived in the fourth century before Christ, and that he received his ideas from Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Much that is contained in the Targums had doubtless been handed down from one learned Israelite to another. And when we view these extracts as bearing upon the passage just quoted from the Wisdom of Solomon, their illustrative and corroborative force cannot be denied. Professor Westcott considers that this Apocryphal book must have been written from 80 to 150 years before Christ.† It is thus proved conclusively that it was the opinion of the flower of the Jewish nation that God did '*prepare a holy tabernacle from the beginning*,' and that He did cause '*the glory of His Presence*' to reside or dwell there between the two cherubim. Now this very expression, '*the Shechinah*,' frequently occurs in the Targums to denote the glory that rested between the cherubim. For instance, the Targum of Jonathan on 1 Kings, viii. 12, 13,

\* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii. pp. 1660, 1661. Compare also Dr. G. Smith's *Doctrine of the Cherubim*, p. 111.

† Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii. p. 1782. Art. *Wisdom of Solomon*.

renders it thus: 'The Lord is pleased to make Shechinah dwell in Jerusalem. I have built ~~t~~ house of the sanctuary for the house of thy Shechinah for ever.' In Isa. vi. 5, this expression is connected with the glory which enveloped the seraphim. runs:—'The glory of the Shechinah of the ~~Kir~~ of ages, the Lord of hosts.' And it is a very striking fact, that though the Jews did not observe this glory in the Second Temple they evidently expected that it would return in the days of the Messiah. Zech. ii. 10, is thus paraphrased:—'will be revealed, and will cause my Shechinah dwell in the midst of thee.' And viii. 3 is thus translated:—'I will make my Shechinah dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.' Ezek. xliii. 7, affords matter for a still more striking comment: 'So of man, this is the place of the house of the throne of my glory, and this is the place of the house of the dwelling of my Shechinah, where will make my Shechinah dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.'\* From a comparison of all these passages it is clear, that the same outward manifestation of the Divine Presence which rested upon the mercy-seat in the Tabernacle and in the Temple, and which was expected to be again revealed in the days of Messiah the Prince, was believed to

\* Lord Arthur Hervey, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* vol. iii. pp. 1240, 1241. Art. Shechinah.

have shone forth for the first time above the cherubim which were placed at the gate of the garden of Eden, and to have continued throughout the whole of the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations.

There can be little doubt that this glory was that 'presence of the Lord' before which Cain and Abel presented their offerings, and from which Cain fled after he had killed his brother. (Gen. iv. 3-5, and 16.) It is very natural to conclude that the same manifestation appeared often to the patriarchs. Parkhurst and Archdeacon Stopford quite believe that the tabernacle with the glory and the cherubim continued from Adam to Moses. Thus the Pillar-cloud spake with Enoch. And there is a very striking expression in Gen. vii. 1, 'And the Lord said unto Noah, *Come thou and all thy house into the ark.*' As if the Lord were within the ark, inviting Noah to enter. It would seem as if the glory rested there during the flood, for when it was over, we read in Gen. viii. 15, 16, 'And God spake unto Noah, saying, *Go forth* of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.' As if the Lord were there with him. So in Gen. xvii. 1, we are informed: 'And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord *appeared* to Abram:'—not merely spake, but appeared. And Stephen declares that this was not the first occasion. 'The God of glory appeared unto our father Abra-

ham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran.' This also indicates the fact that He appeared as 'the God of *glory*.' There was a similar vision vouchsafed to Moses. For the Lord Jesus must have been 'the Angel of the Lord,' who 'appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.' (Exod. iii. 2.) We have already noticed that the thirty-third chapter of Exodus shews us that a tabernacle existed before the Tabernacle was made according to the pattern given Moses in the Mount. And the cloudy pillar which enshrined the glory descended to the door of that tabernacle to speak with Moses.

It is therefore most probable that the Shechinah continued till after the flood, and even throughout the days of the patriarchs. But even if this glory were partially withdrawn, it is clear that manifestations of it were vouchsafed from time to time to those who walked with God. And it is quite certain that there must have been an essential unity between the cherubim of Eden and those of the Tabernacle.

We need not suppose that the cherubim at the gate of Eden had any palpable or concrete form. Most likely they appeared to be a part of the vision of glory, but only to be distinguished by their shape from the self-infolding or upward ascending flame, yet as immaterial as the cloudy pillar which rested at the Tabernacle door, or over the holiest of all. It is in the Tabernacle which Moses made that they

assume for the first time a palpable form, and are constructed of the most precious metal. As revealed to Ezekiel, they not only seem to breathe and move, but they exhibit the highest development of life and intelligence. No longer dead and impassive, as on the mercy-seat, every particle gleams with supernatural sight, swiftness, knowledge, vigour, and activity. They are covered with eyes, and they are resplendent with a burning brightness.

It cannot have been without a special purpose that the Tabernacle which enshrined the cherubim was placed '*at the East of the garden of Eden.*' There is little doubt that the reason of this was to prevent the possibility of sun-worship, which was the earliest form of idolatry, and which we know from the Book of Job (xxxi. 26-28) prevailed in the days of the patriarchs. Now, if this 'presence of the Lord' appeared close to the eastern wall, or natural barrier, which shut off the garden of Eden from the outer world, no one could have approached it in order to worship without turning his back to the east, and facing the west. A divided service would thus have been impossible, and worshippers could not have pretended to bow before the Lord while they were actually adoring the sun. As God foresaw how soon apostasy against Himself would take the form of sun-worship, and be inaugurated on a grand and daring scale by Nimrod, that 'mighty hunter before the Lord,' as Mr. Hislop

has so incontestably proved in his *Two Bells*, He thus provided against hypocrisy. became absolutely necessary for men to take ~~side~~ either for the Lord or against Him. We might suppose that this arrangement was accidental, ~~but~~ we not find that both the Tabernacle and Temple were constructed in such a way that every worshipper, on entering, must turn his back on the east. For the Holy of Holies was at the west end of the Tabernacle, and the only entrance to the holy place was on the east. The priests, as they entered the holy place, faced the west, and so did every Israelite who brought his offering to the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation. How great the danger was of this idolatry, and how gross were the transgressions of the Israelites, spite of every provision and commandment of the Lord, is evident from what we read in Ezek. viii. 15, 16. Here we note what is reckoned by God as a 'greater abomination' than any of the three kinds of idolatry pointed out to the Prophet in the earlier part of the chapter. 'Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, beholding at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.' Those among

ourselves who pay so superstitious a regard to the east should note how the practice commenced.

II. Our next question is, What was typified or taught by these symbolic appearances, as exhibited to Adam and his sons? We are convinced that they could not have symbolized angels, because there is no truth for us connected with those bright and happy beings, except the ministry in which they serve on behalf of the heirs of salvation. And the cherubim, together with all that was incorporated in the service of the Tabernacle, were 'a shadow of good things to come.' (Compare Heb. ix. 5, 9, with x. 1.) These 'good things' were for us. These symbolic figures must therefore have taught God's people what His purposes were towards them. And this is the more clear when we compare the analogy of the Lord's dealings with His children at other times. He never has permitted a fall (on earth, at any rate,) without a hint or hope of recovery. He never inflicts a punishment without a prospect of remission. We should accordingly look for some such gracious indication immediately to follow on our first parents' banishment from Paradise. But if the popular supposition be accepted, no gleam of mercy was allowed to shine forth from this mysterious vision, no tidings of gladness for the future sounded forth from these silent messengers. Two angelic beings come down from heaven, each brandishing a flaming sword in his right hand: the one places his left hand on Adam's shoulder, the

other on Eve's; after which they depart, and our ancestors see them no more. But the narrative tells us that the man was driven out *before* the cherubim were stationed at the gate. And there is not the slightest shadow of proof that the cherubim held the sword; nay rather, the original shews that the sword 'turned itself.' And as to the meaning of the emblem, is it not far more rational to believe, indeed, are we not constrained to conclude, that when God intended thereby to proclaim to Adam what this?—'You have forfeited your right to the tree of life; you cannot partake of it now; you are no longer fitted for immortality, while sin reigns within you. But a period is coming when you shall be restored to still higher privileges than you lost; when you, with all the ransomed among your children, shall share the very glory of God Himself and partake of His nature.' This we can understand: this commends itself to us as closely conformable to the universal method of that God who created man in order to redeem him, who reveals Himself in 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'

In precise analogy with this we find the full revelation of the grandest appearance of the cherubim—that which was granted to Ezekiel. The time when the heavens were opened for him was in the days of the captivity, when Israel's sins were greatest, and their hope was at its lowest ebb. The cherubim first appeared when Adam had been driven

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out of Eden. Long after, they were manifested when Israel had been banished from the Lord's land. In the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel, the description of the glory which was united with the living creatures occurs. In the eleventh chapter and 16th verse the promise is given:—‘Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.’ And then the Lord prophesies that He will ‘put a new spirit within them,’ and adds; ‘they shall be my people, and I will be their God.’ Almost immediately after we read, ‘Then did the cherubim lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.’ (xi. 22.) So as soon the Lord had revealed Himself as ‘the God of Israel,’ and the ‘little sanctuary’ to His people, the glory and the cherubim departed for a season. May we not therefore conclude that they were closely connected with the promise of the indwelling? And may we not gather that the vision was sent for the special purpose not of terrifying, but of comforting the remnant?

This comparison will aid us farther to unravel their typical meaning in Genesis, where Professor Fairbairn aptly terms them ‘the symbols of worship, the emblems of fear and hope.’ For we may

see shadowed forth distinctly therein both the Law and the Gospel.

1. The Law was evidently typified by the glory, which rayed forth from the flaming sword. All agree that the Hebrew word means a destroying instrument. And even if the sword were entirely made of flame, it was a glory that deterred, while it attracted. The patriarchs were drawn to reverence and worship, but they feared to approach too near. And even if Moses was bidden not to draw nigh when he first gazed upon the burning bush, (Exod. iii. 5,) and found the sight of Sinai's flame so terrible that he said, 'I exceedingly fear and quake,' (Heb. xii. 21,) no wonder that 'the sight of the glory of the Lord was like *devouring fire* on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.' (Exod. xxiv. 17.) So the flaming sword tells us that God dwells in light unapproachable, and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. This sword turns itself: it is wielded by an unseen agent; and it is directed towards the sinner. And though the translation which intimates that the sword 'turned every way' may not represent the letter of the original, it expresses its spirit. The flaming sword does deter the unrepentant sinner, and whichever way he attempts to approach the glory, it leaps forth against him. There is no possibility for him to approach God, while that law is his enemy, and while that flame burns to condemn. Whichever way he turns, whether northward, or eastward, or

southward, or westward, he is confronted by the law. And though he knows that 'if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law,' yet he is forced to exclaim, This is 'the letter that killeth.' Doubtless the same truth was taught by the sharp two-edged sword which St. John saw proceeding out of the mouth of the Son of Man when He appeared in glory. (Rev. i. 16.) That sword is the Word of God, and especially the law that saith, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' Its power to condemn is terrible. Do not think you can escape from it. It's blade has two edges, and it never ceases to turn. The Word of God, without Christ, only causes alarm. Christ Himself, if neglected and despised, will be the Judge to punish.

Do you find it difficult to understand why the Glory of the Presence was so awful? And do you wonder why he who touched the Ark whereon that glory rested with unhallowed hand was struck down and died? Remember that this is all in keeping with the Old Testament truth that no one could draw near to the Holy of Holies except the High Priest, and he only once a-year, and that with blood. This may seem at first to militate against the glorious truth that the cherubim are types of the redeemed, for they were evidently closely connected with the glory. O no, my readers, it only proves all the more plainly that there is no road to the glory but

through the blood of our Surety, and that our poor High Priest must first sprinkle that blood in the holiest of all, in the very presence of God, ere any of us could tread that hallowed spot. St. Paul explicitly gives this as the reason why the High Priest alone could enter the Holy of Holies, ‘not without blood,’ in Heb. ix. 8 : ‘The Holy Ghost this signeth, that the way into the holiest of all was not made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was standing.’ The sword within the glory proclaimed to the sinner :—‘Do not venture nigh unsprinkled. Do not approach till your great High Priest has entered into heaven itself, and by one offering has perfected them that are sanctified.’ In the Lord’s reply to the lawyer who asked Him, ‘Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ He drew from him the summary of the law, ‘I shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, thy neighbour as thyself.’ And when He had heard it, He added, “Thou hast answered right: *do, and thou shalt live.*’ If man could do this he would obtain at once that *life* of which these symbols are so full, that *eternal life* which the lawyer faintly desired. The Law cannot advance beyond this point :—‘Do this, and thou shalt have *right to the tree of life.*’

2. But the Gospel was taught with equal clearness by this holy tabernacle of glory and its in-

bitants. For not only was there a flaming sword in the glory, but there were the cherubim there too. And what was typified thereby was meant to encourage and attract. The purpose of these symbols, and particularly of the flaming sword, was 'to keep the way of the tree of life.' Now, we must not suppose that this word 'keep' intimates merely 'to guard,' in the sense of forbidding, and that we are to infer that no mortal henceforth could ever taste that fruit. The express revelations of Scripture will not admit of such a supposition. For in Rev. ii. 7 the promise is given to the Church of Ephesus:—'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.' And we know that this privilege is universal in its offer, for in the last chapter of the Revelation, and 14th verse, after a description of the existence of this tree, and the richness of its fruit, in the New Jerusalem, we read, 'Blessed are they that do his commandments,' [or, 'Blessed are they that wash their robes,' according to the oldest and best manuscripts,] 'that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.' So it was never purposed by our Creator that this tree and its blessings should be for ever fenced off from human touch. It was only meant that they should be kept till the appointed period. 'The privilege of partaking its immortal fruit was only withheld for a season, not finally withdrawn—waiting

until a righteousness should be brought in, might again open the way to its blessed provision. Professor Fairbairn tells us that the later Jews had some knowledge of this truth. ‘Of the seven types which they imagined Messiah would shew to us, two were the garden of Eden and the tree of life. And they declare, there are those who say, that the tree of life, that it was not created in vain, but that men of the resurrection shall eat thereof, and for ever.’\* Here, then, we see the Gospel. The Saviour announced that He had prepared a way from eternity by which fallen man could be restored to a close union with Himself. He declared that man should not be for ever banished from the region of life and joy, but that He would dwell among us, and make His glory to shine upon them, and that in the last, instead of being driven from His presence, man should reign with Him as joint-assessors on the throne. Such symbols may well be called ‘an index of mercy and hope.’ And the author from whom we have just quoted may well say that ‘the idea is nothing unnatural or far-fetched in such a logical reflection. It manifestly lay within the reach of the very earliest members of a believing seed; especially since the light it is supposed to have conveyed did not stand alone, but was only supplementary to that embodied in the first grand promise to the fathers.’

\* Fairbairn’s *Typology of Scripture*, i. 253, 255.

that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent.\* In these cherubim we see the Church of Christ in resurrection-glory. We stand where Adam paused, and through the long vista of ages, not only discern the finished work of redemption, but the ransomed of the Lord putting on the glorious liberty of His children in body, soul, and spirit. The blessed fact of the restoration of eternal life by substitution must have been taught to Adam and Eve by sacrifice, else why did the Lord clothe them with coats of skins? It must have been to proclaim 'a life for a life.' And immediately after this we are told of the principle of an offering to the Lord, and an offering through the blood, having been recognized and acted upon. And we see that to *such* a sacrifice alone the Lord had respect. Propitiation by bloodshedding was thus preached from the very beginning. Only wilfulness and unbelief presented a barrier to its full perception. For 'by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.' (Heb. xi. 4.)

And if, in those early days, faith could discern the Glory of the Presence, and the ransomed participating in that glory, how much more clearly can we see it, who have not only the shadow but the substance? God has in some measure 'shewn us

\* Fairbairn's *Typology*, i. 275.

the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to which is.' (Job, xi. 6.) We know that the ant exactly answers to the type, and that the seal is express image of the die in which it was. And so, as we have the whole New Testament to guide us with regard to the import of the types which were vouchsafed from the beginning, we be in no perplexity regarding these ancient emblems. What was shadowed forth 6000 years ago is distinctly expressed by St. Paul in Heb. x. 19. 'Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new living way, which he hath consecrated [or, made, margin,] for us, through the veil, that : say, his flesh ; and having an high priest over the house of God ; let us draw near with a true heart, full assurance of faith.' You that are fearful : not be alarmed. Boldness to enter shall be given you, and boldness to speak. No flashes from Divine glory shall consume you, if you believe the record God has given of His Son. It is a new, and yet an old one, for it has been 'new made.' This fitly expresses the original, ἐνεκαίνισεν. weak and fearful are encouraged to 'draw near.' The babes in Christ are stirred up to 'full assurance of faith.' And the young men in Him are besought to 'hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering.' (v. 23.) For surely no study is better fitted to impart to the Lord's people this full assurance.

than an examination of His types. As they trace the marks of the Master's hand on each stone with which the Church of the Patriarchs was fashioned, they obtain a firmer grasp of the truth they loved before, and the near Presence of their High Priest banishes every shadow of turning.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CHERUBIM ON THE MERCY-SEAT.

‘ And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end : even of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another ; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be.’—*Exod. xxv. 18–20.*

FROM the beginning of the world’s history God revealed the nature and the necessity of sacrifice. He shewed that a life must be given for a life, and that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. He had from time to time shone forth in the glory in order that its brightness might awe the transgressor, and keep him at a distance. And He had manifested Himself as tabernacling within the mysterious figures of the ransomed, in order that He might encourage and revive the contrite. But although Abel and Job and Abraham offered burnt offerings, the service of sacrifice was in a very rudi-

mentary stage until the children of Israel were brought out of Egypt. Then it was that the Lord's purposes became clear and palpable, and were cast in a more systematic form for the instruction of 'the church in the wilderness.' It was then that the precious truths regarding the indwelling and redemption were distinctly brought before the children of Israel, in a way that they could not forget. It is always the Lord's method to witness regarding His salvation either by the living voice or by the silent type. And therefore He called the moveable structure round which His worship centred, the Tabernacle of witness or testimony. Of this tabernacle the Holy of Holies was the innermost shrine. Its only furniture was the Ark of the testimony, with the Cherubim above it, and indeed part of it, and the Tables of the testimony. The Tabernacle bore witness of Christ's body, the Church. The Ark testified of Christ, and the Tables testified of His law. If, then, every other portion of the Tabernacle bore witness to some important truth relative to Christ's salvation of sinners, can we except the Cherubim? Or can we suppose that the Ark testified one thing, and the Cherubim another? Surely it is evident that whatever the Mercy-seat witnessed must be in the closest connexion with the testimony of those emblematic figures which were made of the same piece of gold. And if the Mercy-seat pre-figured redemption, the witness of the Cherubim

must have referred to the redeemed. Undoubtedly they must have shewed that Christ is one with His people.

But, it may be asked, what were they like? It has often been supposed that they were made to represent angels. But this is impossible; for the children of Israel were forbidden to 'make any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.' Do not, therefore suppose that these were likenesses of anything that ever existed in heaven or in earth. God would not have made a law and then commanded it to be broken. Nor even would an *apparent* exception to this law have been made, unless some very important truth were to be taught thereby. We now know what that truth was. Symbolic representations were permitted, to teach precious facts and realities, not to portray actual existences which ever were, or ever shall be. The confirmation which is here afforded us of their typical meaning is full of value and comfort

I. Let us inquire what was taught by the Mercy-seat.

II. Then we will notice the position of the Cherubim thereon.

III. And observe God's promise to meet Moses and His people there. And may the Lord meet and commune with us! May He grant us the power o

insight into truth, so that we may be of quick understanding in the knowledge of the Lord.

I. It is impossible for us to have a full understanding of the type of the Cherubim until we know what the Mercy-seat was. In the Hebrew it is termed Capporeth, or an atonement-covering. In the Greek it is termed *ἱλαστήριον*, or a propitiation. This is the very word used by St. Paul to describe it in Heb. ix. 5: 'Over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat.' Now this same word is translated 'a propitiation' in Rom. iii. 25: 'Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.' So there can be no doubt that in the mercy-seat we see Christ as the Redeemer, Christ as the atonement-covering, and Christ as the one perfect offering for the sins of the world. There are three points of interest with reference to this mercy-seat.

1. The material of which it was to be made was pure gold. And we know that this was actually carried out, because in Exod. xxxvii. 6-9, we are told that Bezaleel made both the mercy-seat and the cherubim according to the pattern here given. Indeed almost all the vessels of the Tabernacle were made of pure gold. The candlestick, together with the dishes, spoons, and covers, which belonged to the table of shew-bread, were constructed entirely of this precious material. The incense-altar and the

table, like the ark, were overlaid with it. I  
been often supposed by careful students o  
types, that the gold signified our Blessed I  
Divinity, and that the shittim-wood set forth  
in incorruptible humanity. The shittim-wood  
made of the acacia, or shittah-tree, and was o  
the least perishable of woods. It was propk  
that Christ's holy human nature should neve  
corruption, (Ps. xvi. 10,) and it came to pass.  
though it is quite possible that these meaning  
true, the most natural thought in reference to  
is its *preciousness*. And as the mercy-seat an  
cherubim were made entirely of gold, it is with  
type alone that we are now occupied. But what c  
more precious than 'the Blood of God?' And  
is the very thought we have brought before  
Acts, xx. 28 : 'Feed the church of God, whic  
hath purchased with his own blood.' Pri  
atonement and ransom with the blood of God'  
Son, these are the two truths taught us b  
mercy-seat. The Jews of old foolishly sup  
that they could redeem their souls by silver  
gold. It is to this that St. Peter alludes in his  
Epistle, first chapter, 18th and 19th verses : 'asmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed  
corruptible things, as silver and gold, from  
vain conversation received by tradition from  
fathers ; but with the precious blood of Chri  
of a lamb without blemish and without spot.'

notion may partly have arisen from the fact that a money compensation was to be paid according to the law for certain offences against life or property, and that the price of a man-servant (who was a slave) was fixed at thirty shekels of silver. (Exod. xxi. 32.) And yet the Israelites had been warned, hundreds of years before, against so perilous a mistake. The author of the forty-ninth Psalm shews that 'They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches ; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.' Indeed, their whole manner of life was so vain that they needed to be redeemed from it, as well as from all their other sins, and the only price which could be paid for this was Christ's blood. This is indeed a wonderful thought, that you are unspeakably precious in God's sight, if ransomed by His Son. An untold sum has been given for you, and, consequently, you belong no longer to yourselves. Your affections, faculties, and powers, yea, your time and life, have all of them the blood-mark upon them. Can you ever forget that you are blood-bought sinners ? Can you act as though you had a right to anything you have, to use as you please ? All the members of the Irish clans had formerly a right of pasturage over the soil, which accordingly they believed belonged to them. And though since that period the land has again and again been bought and sold, many of the people imagine to this moment

that in some mysterious way it belongs to them. It is to this that so many of the disturbances which occur in Ireland must be ascribed. We think their conduct strange, but are we not sometimes equally foolish? Instead of remembering that we belong unreservedly to Him who redeemed us, we keep back a part of our capacities, when all were bought, and all should lovingly, heartily, be rendered to Him who alone has a right to all. We ought to glorify God with body, soul, and spirit, which are His.

2. The purpose of the Mercy-seat was to be a covering. The very word Capporeth is from the Hebrew root Caphar, from which our word 'cover' was derived. And this was true in two senses. Typically, the Mercy-seat covered sin. So, the costly offering of Himself which Christ made was prompted by the love which covers or hides a multitude of sin. It is this that is spoken of by St. James, in v. 20 and St. Peter, in his first Epistle, iv. 8. And in each case the word in the Greek is the same. It was the same thought which led the Psalmist to say (Ps. xxxii. 1,) 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.' Oh, what a complete remission is this, when all our sins are forgotten, as if buried by the waves of the sea! What joy when a man looks back upon his past life, and particularly at his sins, and suddenly finds them all gone! They are sunk into oblivion, and if laid before Christ they will never rise to trouble or condemnation.

again. The mercy-seat is between. They are fed by the propitiation. This is the spirit which is in Christ, and it should be ours also. As Jesus fed our sins, so should we cover the frailties and consistencies of those who have fellowship with us and not pounce on them like a vulture, magnify and hold them to the light.

The Tables of testimony within the Ark were also fed by the Mercy-seat. The law of the ten commandments was written on those two tables. It perfectly kept both, in the letter and in the spirit. He alone could say, in the language of the 45th Psalm, 8th verse, 'I delight to do thy will, O God: yea, thy law is within my heart.' When we look at the ark with the tables of the law within it, we see Christ with the law of God within his heart. And just as those tables exactly fitted into the ark, so did the perfect obedience of Christ exactly meet the demands of God's perfect law. Just as we see in this covering on the one hand an unfathomable love which buries sin, so do we see on the other the perfect righteousness which is found faultless when it is measured by the standard of God's holiness. Indeed, the law was written in the Son of God in a manner which shall again be exhibited on earth: for 'love is the fulfilling of the law;' and love was the very atmosphere in which He breathed and moved while he abode here below, as it was the prompting

principle which led Him to forsake His glory high to enrich our poverty. This righteousness not, like ours, too narrow or too short a cover. It makes up for all our deficiencies, besides atone for all our sins: our own righteousness is too scarce a covering for us to wrap ourselves therein. Christ's righteousness is the spotless wedding garment, which clothes us down to the feet, and makes us fit to appear as priests before God. In Christ the whole of God is covered, as well as the sin of man.

3. We must also notice the position of the Mercy-seat. It was between the cherubim and the tables of the testimony—in fact, between the law deemed and the law of God. The Lord's people are quite safe, because the propitiation stands between them and the commands of a God who cannot lie. The propitiation wrought out by one who has fulfilled every jot and tittle of that law. How comforting it is to know that redemption comes between the sinner and the justice of an offended God! A ransomed need not fear a flaming nor a two-edged sword. He can throw himself before the mercy-seat and plead the name of the Kinsman who became surety and paid his ransom. ‘Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.’ (Rom. x. 4.) Yet He was not the end of the law in the sense of abolishing, but of completing and fulfilling it. All the law pointed to Christ, its Maker, its Pattern, its Exemplifica-

It was He who framed the perfect standard, and then fulfilled it for our sakes. Surely we may say,

‘Ours is such a full salvation,  
All, all is well.’

Thus ‘by one offering hath he perfected for ever them that are sanctified.’

II. The next point is the Cherubim in their present position on the mercy-seat, or rather as constructed out of it. Moses was commanded to ‘make two cherubim of gold. Of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat.’ And it is added, according to the margin, ‘of the matter of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof.’ And from xxxvii. 8 we know that this was exactly carried out. They were made of the same piece of gold. Whoever, therefore, are typified by the cherubim, are one with Christ; and not merely one with Him, *but united to Him by redemption*. This is the most important link in our chain. The cherubim were not merely one with Christ, but one with Him as the Propitiation. Is it possible, then, that any others can be portrayed thereby, but those of human flesh whom He has ransomed? It must be to this that St. Peter refers, (in his 2nd Ep. i. 4,) when, in speaking of the exceeding great and precious promises, he adds, ‘that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.’ It is

redemption that humbles and then exalts us. The sinful nature is subdued, and we are made to share God's nature, His might, His majesty, His glory. Christ's people and He are one now, and one for ever. They are one in the everlasting covenant for through the blood of that covenant Christ was brought again from the dead, not simply as the Son of God, but as the great Shepherd of the sheep. One in the eternal counsels of the Trinity; for He 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' One with Him on the cross; for they are 'crucified with Christ.' One with Him in the grave; for they are 'buried with him.' One with Him in resurrection-glory; for with Him they 'walk in newness of life.' One with Him in His ascension to the immediate presence of God; for they 'sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' As, then, the death and their life are His, their prayers and their praises, and their very faith, the union is so complete, that it needs nothing more except the revelation of the full Christ, the Head and the members which will also be 'the manifestation of the sons of God.' I can therefore say, Whatever is mine is Christ's—whatsoever is Christ's is mine. All sins and shortcomings are transferred to Christ. His righteousness and strength are made over to us all the riches of His grace, His wisdom and glory. The same truth is taught in Heb. ii. 11: 'For he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified

one : ' this doubtless means, ' of one nature.' makes His people brethren in the truest sense; ving lost the Divine image at the fall, He s them thereto; and when chosen in Him, also did predestinate them to be conformed to age of his Son, that he might be the firstborn many brethren.' (Rom. viii. 29.) Christ is ted to the believer, that his sufferings are s sufferings, and his reproach Christ's re- . And they are so one, that Christ's life, and victory, belong to the believer already.

reover, not only is the general oneness of urch with Christ typified here, but a parti- meness, which is drawn from the material of these symbols were both constructed. Had een made of wood, we should have learned ie nature which linked them was the same. both are made of gold, we know that both ually precious in the sight of the Father. Is unspeakably dear to His Father? So are the dear to Him as the apple of His eye. Their precious; for His life was the ransom for

Their death is precious; for we read in vi. 15, ' Precious in the sight of the Lord is ath of his saints.' Their faith is precious: ter tells us, (1st Ep. i. 7) its trial is ' much precious than of gold which perisheth.' And second Epistle he has used a special word to this in the original, which we translate

‘like precious.’ And it must be of infinite value if we can say with St. Paul, ‘The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.’ (Gal. ii. 20.) In that case it is Christ who believes within us, and our faith must be precious in the ~~sight~~ of God. Indeed, our struggles and our conquests must be equally precious. The Lord does not look with disfavour or forgetfulness upon ~~us~~ because we have failed or fallen. The very trial of our faith is precious, and He will raise us up if ~~w~~ are His own; for ‘having loved his own ~~which~~ were in the world, he loved them even to the end.’ (John, xiii. 1.) Nor can we doubt who are meant, for in Heb. ii. 16 we are expressly reminded: ‘For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.’ It is therefore incontestably clear, that those who are redeemed from among men are symbolized here. They make up the bride of Christ, whose vesture and ornaments are painted in the forty-fifth Psalm: ‘Upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.’ ‘The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.’

The cherubim on the mercy-seat had a twofold look. ‘Their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubim be.’ That the cherubim in their perfect form had four faces we know from Ezekiel. But it is hardly

likely that on the mercy-seat they had more than two; and most probably these were the faces of the lion and the man. Undoubtedly their faces were directed towards the mercy-seat. The ransomed are ever looking at Christ. And their strength arises from the fact that they do not look at Him as the perfect Pattern of a holy life, but on Christ as their atonement and their Saviour. In proportion as you look at yourselves, in that measure will you fail of perfect peace. The hope of many persons arises from their fancy that they have done their utmost to obtain salvation; the anxiety of others is drawn from their fear that their faith is not strong enough. But why should you be troubled about your efforts or your faith? Look at the mercy-seat. There you see the perfect righteousness and full redemption wrought out for you by the Lord Jesus. Thousands of the people of God pass their days in perplexity and distress, because they are always looking within. They are always scrutinizing their repentance and faith, their frames and feelings, their defeats and victories. It often seems as if no urgency of expostulation could persuade such to look at once and for ever away from man to the only object which can give confidence and joy—the Man Christ Jesus. Do not look even at the holiest men till you have looked at Christ first. Gazing at them may dishearten or beguile you. Look at Jesus first: look at Him often: look at Him always.

And then, the redeemed must have their toward each other too. In this case the 'shall look,' being in Italics, are not in the original. So the clause might be rendered, 'and their one to another.' Though, therefore, the *two* of these symbols were chiefly directed toward the mercy-seat on which they stood, they also faced another. There was a nearness of position which figured brotherly love and spiritual communion. And the same eye which rested on the Mercy-seat included the other cherub in its range of vision. So every saved soul will warm with holy affection towards a brother in Christ, and every pure member of the true Church will manifest a loving concern towards every other member of the same body. A man who has passed from death unto life, when he looks at Jesus, loves the brethren. This is St. John's desire and experience: 'That we who have seen and heard declare we unto you, that we also may have fellowship with us; and truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ.' (1 John, i. 3.) This twofold fellowship is realized by all the Lord's people. They join in the blessings of Christ's atonement, and they share the fellowship one with another; for being joined together they must speak of their common inheritance. Indeed, it is often by the ministry of saints that the careless are led to look to the Lord Jesus, when they see that their face is upon the mercy-seat.

is by the same ministry that God's true disciples are quickened and refreshed. It is needful, therefore, that their faces should be one to another. None of the members of the same body should keep apart the one from the other, for they have all been made to drink into one Spirit. It is this that is taught us in Zech. xi., in which Christ says that He will feed His flock with two staves, and that the one is called Beauty, and the other Bands. The first signifies the beauty of the Lord, the beauty of holiness, by which God feeds His people in immediate supplies from Himself. It is the beauty of His covenant. The second, named Bands, means the brotherhood, or fellowship, which exists between one company of believers and another. It also signifies the method by which the true Shepherd feeds His children through the ministry of those who have already tasted that the Lord is gracious. If, then, mutual brotherhood is one of the chief means by which we are rooted and grounded in the love of Christ, the unity of the sons of God, under different outward names in the Church of Christ, should be more lovingly and fearlessly maintained. Besides our union to Jesus, by virtue of which we have all a common nature, our faces must be one to another. As the last great struggle approaches, God's children will be drawn more closely to one another. For when the men of the world confederate and combine, the children of light will see the absolute necessity

of laying aside minor differences, in order to shew the reality and intensity of their unity.

Not only do the ransomed, as has already been pointed out, look at the law through Christ, but they also gaze upon the glory. It is not impossible that this may be referred to in 2 Cor. iii. 18: 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.' The Shechinah which hovered above the cherub must have been reflected in the polished surface of the Mercy-seat beneath, being a bright mirror burnished gold. As they turned to gaze upon the glory, and always saw it reflected upon the Mercy-seat, so the forgiven ones need never dwell upon God's essential glory, in all its justice and severity. They see it as it rests upon His Son:—they see it full of grace and truth:—they see it manifested in God's great work of redemption:—and they do not fear. Nay rather, the longer they look at the glory of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the more they are transformed into His likeness. And thus they are fitted and prepared for the blessed period when, exalted to the joy of the Lord, they shall be able to bear the glory in its fulness.

Nor could it have been without a special meaning that 'the cherubim spread out their wings on high and covered with their wings over the mercy-seat.'

This denotes the soaring spirituality of the Lord's people. Though sometimes their soul cleaveth to the lust, a new nature has been imparted to them, by virtue of which they cannot make this world their home. And so they are often prone to cry, 'O that I had wings like a dove, that I might flee away, and be at rest !' The Christian is distinguished by his unearthliness. He is in the world, but not of it. He is a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, and he knows that when the earth is burned up he has a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. And so he is not attracted by anything sensuous or earthy. Whatever appeals to the eye only in his worship he regards as fraught with danger. Indeed, whatever would enchain any of his senses to earth, even in the professed service of God, he uses sparingly and cautiously. For he hears a great voice as of a trumpet calling from an unseen height, 'Come up hither.' And he feels himself borne on the wings of the great eagle, sometimes into the wilderness far from the darts and malice of the enemy, and sometimes into heaven itself, where the sights are grander, the sounds sweeter, and the odours more balmy, than ought that is seen, or heard, or felt here below. And therefore his worship must be simple and spiritual. Local sanctity for him has passed away. Like Ezekiel's cherubs, he has been lifted up above the lower sanctuary. His life is hid with Christ in God. United to Christ by

the redemption-tie, he is constrained to be where Jesus is by the resurrection-tie. And by the power of Christ's ascension he mounts and never descends. Every day, every hour, finds him nearer the throne of God, more weaned from earth, more set on heaven. It is more easy for him to do his Father's will than it once was. He moves more swiftly in the lowly path of his Lord's commands. And as his heart expands and soars, he is reminded of that period when he will be able to move with wondrous rapidity and ease in executing his Father's behests.

III. Our last point in connexion with the cherubim of carved or beaten work is, God's promise to meet with Moses there. Verse 22: 'And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all the commandments which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.' Christ is the point where God meets with man. In Christ we have forgiveness. He is the propitiation. In Christ we have all that we need for He is the way to the Father. In Christ we have all that we need for communion, for in Him the Father is well pleased. All this communion must be sanctified by the blood. 'I will meet thee, and commune with thee above the mercy-seat.' There must ever be a remembrance of Christ as the slain Lamb. Every step, therefore, brings us nearer to the grand truth, that Christ is

us not in the ministry of angels, but by His own revelation of Himself as the Ransomer of His Church. We must recognize the comfort that flows from the fact that angels are ever ministering to them which shall be heirs of salvation. But we must not suppose for a moment that angels have a mediatorial position. The Lord does not meet with us through angels, but He meets us in Christ; and He communicates Himself to us without human or angelic intervention. Surely it is this that we gather from the express promise that God would meet with Moses *there*, between the two cherubim. On this supposition the meaning of the promise can be explained and understood; but we are at a loss to know how any other interpretation of the symbol gives the slightest clue to it. And we know from Num. vii. 89, that this promise was realized by Moses, as indeed we have reason to believe it was also by Aaron and the succeeding high priests. 'And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with him, then he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of testimony: and he spake unto him.' Christ and His Church are one; therefore all that the Father has granted the Son is for the benefit of that Church. All things have been delivered to the Son by the Father for this purpose, that God may be revealed by the Son to whomsoever He pleases. Christ is the centre-point of the universe. In the eternal purpose of the

Father, all His Church was chosen in Him; and **to** the same goal all God's dealings with His **people** tend, for we read in Eph. i. 9, 10, 'He hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness **of** times he might gather together in one all things **in** Christ.' Believers, then, are united in Christ; **in** Him they are gathered together, and in Him **they** have access to the Father. How gracious is **this** promise, not only that we may approach God, **but** that He will commune with us, and make known **to** us His will! He will not be silent to us, but **will** speak in accents of love and mercy. But the **full** revelation of God's purposes is reserved for 'the **ages** to come.' It is then that He will 'shew us the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.' (Eph. ii. 7.) For 'the holy places made with hands are figures of the true,' and the complete communion shadowed by their types cannot be realized here. The fulness of the fellowship is kept for the upper sanctuary; for if God talked with man in the cool of the day, even **in** Paradise, still more blissful and less alloyed will **be** the outbreathings of that love, which is strong **as** death, which plucked the bleeding stranger from the grasp of mighty foes, and placed him as a jewel **in** the diadem of the Prince of the kings of the earth.

O my friends, if Christ be all in all to you, **how** rich are your privileges and how priceless **your** inheritance! You have the bread which has been

for many years laid up in the Holy of Holies to feed upon. Such manna is yours as God giveth not to the world. An ample provision has been made for your journey. The work of Christ is so complete that in it you may have perfect forgiveness, perfect strength, and perfect conquest. Let your fellowship with the Father and the Son be closer. Never assay to commune without an eye upon the blood-sprinkled Mercy-seat. You shall be strengthened and sanctified by the love that excelleth. Boldness to enter into the holiest is now granted to the Lord's people; boldness to pray, to speak, and to act. You need not fear as long as the blood-mark rests upon you. Remember who it is that saith, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore.' Mount upward in your airy flight. Forget the things below. Reach on with firm and steady grasp to lay hold on the joy set before you.

Nor should those who hunger and thirst after righteousness delay any longer. Although out of Christ God is a consuming fire, He yearns to succour and to save all who will come to Him by the one way of access He has provided—the Brother-Man, Christ Jesus.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CHERUBIM ON THE VEIL.

‘For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.’  
*Eph. v. 30.*

REPRESENTATIONS of the Cherubim were to be found in three different parts of the Tabernacle;—on the Mercy-seat, on the Curtains which covered the framework of the Tabernacle, and on the Veil which separated between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Proof of this is given us in Exod. xxvi. ‘Moreover, thou shalt make the tabernacle with curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubim of cunning work, (or the margin has it, with cherubim the work of a cunning workman, or embroiderer,) shalt thou make them.’ Of precisely the same materials was the veil to be constructed. See the 31st verse of the same chapter. ‘And thou shalt make a vail of blue, purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen [of the work of an embroiderer: see margin] with cherubim shall it be made.’ And as we know from the forty-first

chapter of Ezekiel that every cherub in Ezekiel's vision of the Temple, which was represented on a flat surface, had two faces, the face of a man and the face of a young lion, it is most probable that those on the veil and curtains of the Tabernacle had the same appearance.

Now, it must be borne in mind that the Tabernacle brings before us Christ's body, the Church, in its wilderness condition. And so all the types of the Tabernacle are suggestive of weakness and imperfection. It is true the veil was constructed afresh for Solomon's Temple, (see 2 Chron. iii. 14,) and cherubim wrought thereon. And we know that the Second Temple had a similar veil. But in Solomon's Temple the partition between the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place was partly made of folding doors, between the openings of which the veil hung. In the Tabernacle there was no other wall of partition except the veil. In a peculiar sense, therefore, its typical value pertains to the Tabernacle. We are accordingly called on to inquire,—

- I. What the veil was a type of.
- II. What further instruction is implied in the cherubim being wrought thereon.

- I. The New Testament assures us that the veil was a type, and a very important one. Nor are we left in any ignorance as to its meaning. The words

of Hebrews, x. 20, are:—‘By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.’ The veil typifies the body, or flesh of the Lord Jesus. It was only natural to expect this. For the Tabernacle represents the mystical body of Christ, and everything in it testified of Him. The shewbread portrayed Christ as the Bread of Life; the candlestick exhibited His Church receiving light from His Spirit. All the vessels and all the furniture of the Tabernacle shewed some fresh truth regarding our Blessed Lord. Thus the veil symbolizes Christ’s sinless humanity. When we gaze thereon, we see the same body which suffered, was wounded, and slain for us. And whatever the veil was constructed of, whatever was wrought thereon, and whatever happened thereto, must illustrate the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, and set forth those who participate in those sufferings and in the victory which followed.

Let us first notice its component parts, and then its typical history. It was made of ‘blue, purple, scarlet, and fine linen.’

1. Blue is the colour of heaven. When Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, with seventy of the elders of Israel, ‘saw the God of Israel,’ ‘there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.’ (Exod. xxiv. 10.)

A very similar appearance was seen by Ezekiel

in his vision of the cherubim, recorded in i. 26: 'And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.' The same was again revealed to the prophet when caught in vision to Jerusalem. See chap. x. 1. As the blue of the sapphire is in all these passages connected with heaven, and with a revelation of the Lord Jesus, who in Ezekiel is manifested as Priest and King, we cannot doubt that blue typically imports that revelation of heavenly things which Christ alone can give us. For as He Himself told Nicodemus, 'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.' (John, iii. 13.) And therefore no one else can tell us of heavenly things. There was then a needsbe that the veil must be blue, in order to shew that the same Lord Jesus, who tabernacled for a short season in our flesh, was even then in some mysterious way 'the Son of man which is in heaven.' In Him all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are *hid*; and therefore in Him, through Him, and by Him, must all those treasures be revealed. This typical truth was carried out in the minutest details relative to the high priest's holy garments for glory and for beauty. All he was commanded to wear had an element of blue. The breastplate, the ephod, and its curious

or embroidered girdle, were to be made of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen. (Exod. xxviii. and xxxix.) But the robe of the ephod was to be made 'all of blue.' This was the high priest's principal garment. It was visible below the ephod, which was much shorter, and on its hem were fastened the pomegranates of blue, of purple, and of scarlet, and the golden bells. This teaches us truth regarding our Blessed Lord, whose dress while upon earth was very similar to this, 'a coat without seam, woven from the top throughout.' (John, xix. 23.) And it shews that our Blessed Lord was steeped in an atmosphere of heavenliness. Every word, every look, evidenced that He was about His Father's business. He always spoke of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; but when He had put on His resurrection-body these truths seemed more radiant, and the blessings which He promised seemed nearer. The breastplate, which was the high priest's choicest ornament, was bound unto the gold rings of the ephod by a lace of blue. Two reasons were given for this:—'that it may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod.' Do we not see heaven typified here? As the lace of blue kept the breastplate high, *above* the curious girdle of the ephod, so does the righteousness which was shadowed by that breastplate come down from

above; its judgment is perfect. And as the breast-plate was *fastened* by the same sapphire band, so does that hope which is based on the promises of God enter like an anchor within the veil, and reach the very presence-chamber of the Almighty. The golden plate on which the motto, 'Holiness to the Lord,' was engraved, was likewise fixed on the forefront of the mitre by a lace of blue. It was fastened 'on high' upon the mitre. And is not holiness a plant of heavenly growth? Nought can preserve full consecration to the Lord but a look ever directed heavenward. Then we have for a helmet the hope of salvation, and we look upward with joy, knowing that our redemption cometh. The Rev. Hugh Macmillan, in his eloquent work entitled *Bible Teachings in Nature*, regards blue as symbolical of the love of God in Christ. But when we regard the attribute of love as the very atmosphere of heaven, all variety in the interpretation of the symbol vanishes. Truly he says:— 'Heavenly love inlays, as it were, all the moral pictures of earth. It is on this precious sapphire foundation that all the promises and declarations of the Gospel rest. So inseparably is love attributed to God, that the Scriptures affirm it to be His very nature—'God is love.' Love is not the mere transient mood or phase of His character; it is, so to speak, His very life.' As every Israelite wore a blue fringe on his garments, whenever he gazed

towards earth, he would be arrested by the colour ~~of~~ heaven. So should it be with the priests of ~~the~~ true sanctuary. Whenever they are constrained to undertake the business of earth, a fringe ~~of~~ heavenly hue should occupy their thoughts, ~~and~~ rule their acts. In the blueness of the veil ~~we~~ see, therefore, the heavenliness of Christ's human nature.

2. Another material, or rather another colour ~~of~~ wrought into the veil, was purple. This portrayed ~~the~~ royalty. Purple raiment was worn by the kings ~~of~~ Midian. (Judg. viii. 26.) Mordecai went out from the presence of the King of Persia in royal apparel ~~of~~ blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple. (Est. viii. 15.) The colour of the clothing given ~~by~~ Belshazzar to Daniel, when he had interpreted ~~the~~ writing on the wall, should be translated purple. So fully understood was it that this colour befit ~~ted~~ an emperor, that our Blessed Lord was clothed in a purple robe by the soldiers out of mockery, at ~~the~~ same time when they platted the crown of thorns and placed it on His sacred head. And in order ~~the~~ more fully to express what they knew He claimed to be, they cried as they bowed the knee, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' (Mark, xv. 17-20. John, xix. 2-5-.) Even the misguided Pilate drew the gaze of ~~the~~ blinded Israelites towards the Lord Jesus in that very dress as he exclaimed, 'Behold the Man!'

'Behold your King!' Rightly does this title and this dress belong to Him. He only is King of kings and Lord of lords. As He lay in His cradle, the inquiry which moved the breasts and rose to the lips of the Eastern sages who journeyed to see Him, was, 'Where is he that is born King of the Jews?' And, all lowly as His earthly ministry was, a royal grace rayed from His countenance, and a kingly sweetness fell from His lips, even when He had not where to lay His head. The very psalm which exhibits the humanity of Christ, represents His royalty in brightest colours. It is the forty-fifth, where the Psalmist discourses 'touching the King.' Though 'fairer than the children of men,' who seem to be, and are concerning the flesh, 'his fellows,' yet His 'throne is for ever and ever.' Sharp arrows are prepared for the king's enemies. Sweet perfumes and golden raiment are laid up for her who is at once the king's daughter and the king's bride. Zechariah predicted (vi. 13) that He, whose name is the Branch, should be a priest upon his throne, and that the counsel of peace should be between them both—between the kingship and the priesthood. So even when Emmanuel gave His life a willing Victim for the sheep, the royal prerogative was as rightly His as when the everlasting doors opened to receive Him as the Lord of hosts and the King of glory. Indeed, it is one of the first truths received by one who is found of Jesus. This led Nathanael to

exclaim, 'Rabbi, thou art the Son of God ; thou art the King of Israel.' And it forces every awakened soul to declare, 'Other lords have had dominion over me ; henceforth by thee only will I make mention of thy name.' It is clear, therefore, that princeliness shone forth from the human nature of the Blessed Saviour.

3. Nor is scarlet less pictorial. It represents to us life, and the blood which is the life. The line of scarlet thread in the window of Rahab's house was the means by which she and all her family had their lives saved when their city was destroyed. (Josh. ii. 18-21.) And just as only one household was saved then, so in the overthrow of that great Jericho, the world, only Christ's household will be delivered, because the scarlet mark is on all its members. It is the very same truth which was taught the children of Israel when the destroying angel smote the first-born of the Egyptians : 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you.' Scarlet wool was one of the means used both to purify the leper, and to cleanse those who had accidentally touched a dead person. And so when believers are brought into contact with those that are spiritually dead there is no other means for them to be healed but by a fresh sprinkling of the blood of the Lord Jesus. It was thus that their own leprosy was cured. The typical meaning of this colour is evidently alluded to by St. Paul in Heb. ix. 19, where he tells us that scarlet wool, together with

hyssop, was made use of by Moses in sprinkling the people with blood after they had heard the words of the covenant. If the blood be the life of the body, scarlet could not be absent from the veil, which typified Christ's flesh. For He is the Lamb without blemish and without spot, by whose wounds we are healed. The efficacy and value of this blood form the life of the Word of God, just in the same manner in which Christ's body is quickened and sustained thereby.

4. There can be no doubt about the meaning of 'fine twined linen.' In Rev. xix. 8, we are told, 'the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' Now this righteousness must in the first instance emanate from One who is holy; for 'the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men; to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.' And what was the moral landscape? 'They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.' Of only one Being who has taken the form of man could it be said, 'Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity.' When, therefore, the high priest in the Jewish dispensation was clothed in a variety of garments for glory and for beauty, nearly all of which were wrought of fine twined linen, the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ was typified therein. In these '*holy garments*,' as all that is made of linen is peculiarly called, (Lev. xvi. 4,) we see Christ

working out a complete obedience to the law ~~the~~ man—fulfilling alike His duty to God and to ~~H~~<sup>is</sup> neighbour, yea, infinitely transcending mere ~~duty~~; for what matchless love was this, to die for ~~sinners~~, even for the most rebellious? We can hardly doubt that 'the Man clothed with linen, which had the writer's ink-horn by his side,' whom Ezekiel saw in vision, (chap. ix.) was Emmanuel. Most certainly the description in Dan. x. 5, 6, can apply to no one else: 'Then I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body was also like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.' This is so exactly like the appearance of the Son of Man to St. John, as recorded in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation, that we know He only can be thus described. There, too, He was 'clothed with a garment down to the feet,' which was evidently the high-priestly robe. In all these types and visions we see the Lord Jesus 'in the likeness of sinful flesh,' (Rom. viii. 3,) yet perfectly holy, both in the flesh and in the spirit, and possessed of a spotless righteousness in order that He may give it to all the members of His mystical body.

Let us now glance briefly at the purposes for which this veil was constructed, and at the miracu-

esus rending thereof when Jesus died. What was its history?

1. It was sometimes called 'the second veil,' to distinguish it from the veil or hanging at the door of the Tabernacle. And its purpose was to separate the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place. No unhallowed foot might enter there. No curious eye might gaze at the mysteries within. Even the high priest was only permitted to pass the sacred precincts once a year, 'not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people.' And the sound of the golden bells on his garment must always be heard, to announce to God and man the sacred and unparalleled character of his mysterious but typical errand. What was the meaning of this? The Holy of Holies figured the immediate presence of the Lord, into which no sinner can have access, unless through the blood of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. By the veil 'the Holy Ghost this signified, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.' (Heb. ix. 8.) We see, then, that Christ's Body stood between the Israelites and the unapproachable glory.

2. But this veil was partially withdrawn on those momentous occasions when the high priest entered in once each year with incense and with blood, to make atonement for sin. So, though the Old Testament saints had not the clear perception of

Christ and the full access to the Father which ~~we~~ have, they caught glimpses of the glory, and ~~were~~ made exceeding glad. By the strong telescope ~~of~~ faith they looked on to 'the decease which Jesus ~~was~~ to accomplish at Jerusalem.'

3. The most wondrous incident in the whole history of the veil was that which befell it at the very moment when the Saviour yielded up the ghost. As three of the Evangelists testify, 'Behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.' (Matt. xxvii. 51.) Nor can there be any doubt of the miraculous character of this rending, or of its peculiar significance. For as the veil was completely rent in two, so was Christ's perfect humanity wounded for us. Therein we see Him bruised for our iniquities. And past His slain body we see a new and living way opened up for us into the holiest of all. Now we need not draw near merely as suppliants: we have boldness, we have confidence; we know that our Father is now not merely merciful, but '*faithful and just* to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' We have a twofold access into the very presence of the Lord. First, we have constant communion with Him through the blood of the atoning sacrifice, so that we bring all our sins and burdens to Christ, and having left them there, are 'accepted in the Beloved.' This is 'the grace of God wherein we stand.' And, secondly, having washed our robes,

We have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. Heaven is ours. It is this to which St. Paul refers in Heb. x. 19-21: 'Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with full assurance of faith.'

In order that the full beauty of this type may be apprehended, consider where the Lord Jesus is now. Fulfilling all that was pictured regarding His once slain, but now glorified body, He has ascended into the ethereal sky, and He is seated on His sapphire throne, clad with the purple robe of royalty, while He pleads the merit of the scarlet stain of His own precious blood. The material of which His raiment is composed resembles fine linen. And it seems as though we could glean the meaning of the description;—'My Beloved is white and ruddy;' for though, as 'King of kings,' He is 'clothed in a vesture dipped in blood,' the effect of that crimson fountain is to render the robe white. And this beauteous dress is for all His redeemed to wear.

II. When the cherubim were wrought upon the veil, we are taught how closely one with Himself all His ransomed are. 'We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.' All that belong to Christ's Church are a part of Himself. When He

suffered, they suffered with Him. Well may Paul say, 'This is a great mystery: but I spe concerning Christ and the Church:' yet it is revealed mystery, as we see from 1 Cor. vi. 14 'Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?' How Christ makes the bodies of believers His habitation is explained by verse 19: 'Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?' It is a spiritual union, which is realized by the incorporation of Christ's life—and that life is the Spirit of Christ. See 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and so are the members of that body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.' Or rather, 'the Christ' for the meaning here evidently is, that 'the Christ' is not complete until all the members are gathered in. The word 'Christ' means the Lord Jesus and His people, for He is one with them, and when He appears in glory every one of them will appear also. The whole body will be complete, and glorious too.

The means whereby this union is realized now explained in verse 13: 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.' It is this that the bride speaks of in Song, ii. 16: 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.' How much is included in this truth! If Jesus be ours, all He has

Ours too. And if we are His, all that was ours is **is**. So He has taken on Him all our sins, cares, and infirmities. And if the Bridegroom has taken on Him all the Bride's poverty and suffering, she receives all the Bridegroom's riches, holiness, victory, and joy. All Christ's righteousness and strength—all His fulness is ours. So completely are Jesus and His Church one, that the same names are given to each. Are we told in Jer. xxiii. 6, of the Righteous Branch, 'This is the name whereby we shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness?' In the thirty-third chapter of the same prophecy, and 16th verse, it is said of Jerusalem, 'This is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.' Jerusalem is always a type of the Church. Is the voice of the Son of man 'as the sound of many waters?' (Rev. i. 15.) In the same book (xiv. 2, 3) the song of the hundred and forty-four thousand, who are redeemed from the earth, seemed like 'the voice of many waters.' So with the great multitude' who shout 'Alleluia; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth;' in xix. 6. Precisely analogous was the impression on Ezekiel's mind by the sound of the wings of the living creatures. (i. 24.) 'And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host.'

Well might the cherubim be worked into the

veil, for in all things the Lord's people are members of His body and partakers of His flesh. Theirs every material of which the veil was composed theirs the heavenly blue, the scarlet stain, the royal purple, and the fair linen, clean and white. We can say with St. Paul, 'I *was* crucified with Christ.' (Exact translation.) When Jesus died, I died also. All my sins were laid upon Him, as He hung upon that cross. And I died to the law, too. The blood which flowed from my Surety is the same as if it was my own.

We are justified with Christ. When the Father raised up Christ from the dead, all the spiritual seed were 'accepted in the Beloved.' The fine linen, which is Christ's own beauteous raiment, is peculiarly called 'the righteousness of saints,' (Rev. xix. 8,) because all of it is intended for those who compose the bride: 'To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white.' The bride is as spotless as the Bridegroom—all fair,—'a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.' (Eph. v. 27.)

The saints are kings already, as well as priests, and so they have a right to royal attire; for 'we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' (Rom. viii. 37.) We are sharers in our Master's victory; for when He overcame death and sin we triumphed also. We know that 'sin shall not have dominion over us;' and the last enemy has yielded

to the Master. O that Christians would walk in the sunlight of their bright inheritance!

Nay: we are in heaven already. For God hath not only quickened us, but 'hath raised us up together [with Christ] and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' (Eph. ii. 6.) For if our Head is in heaven, there must all our members be: in God's eternal counsel, yea, in heart and affection, they are there already. Their treasure is on high, their citizenship is above; and 'wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.' The sapphire marks the redeemed, for the heavenly land is theirs.

Has not our Father said, 'Whom he justified, them he also glorified?' All the mediatorial glory which rests upon the Son is intended for His brethren. He is calling them 'to his own glory.' (2 Pet. i. 3. Best version.) He earned it for them. Divine glory was His before the foundations of the world were laid.

Then, believers, realize your complete identity with Christ. Jesus knows all your sorrows and has tasted all your joys. You cannot have a pang or a perplexity which lies with a feather's weight upon you, which you should not bring to your Burden-bearer. Just as the head feels when the foot is struck, so is the Lord Jesus touched when any of His members suffer. First direct your gaze to His perfect sympathy, and then look at His resurrection-

power. You may draw out of His fulness. You may enter within the veil, and take freely of the boundless store laid up for you. You need never be lonely while He feels for and conquers in you.

The Tabernacle typifies the Church in the wilderness; and, as the cherubim were wrought upon its curtains as well as upon its veil, at each step we may trace the Lord Jesus removing the loneliness, filling the emptiness, and establishing the weakness of His own ransomed ones. And as we note their intimate fellowship we shall ask, 'Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?' The Lord desires that the tie should be made closer, the communion less interrupted. He stands at the door of the heart of believers, until they are forced to cry, 'I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love.' O will we not gladly welcome Him? Shall we not leave our doors always on the latch, that He may enter at any moment? It is a blessed thing to be able to feel, in the midst of business and of care, 'My heart waketh.'

If part of us has even now ascended on high, should not ours be a triumphant and joyous life, victorious over sorrow and sin, and should not the very atmosphere we exhale be the breath of heaven?

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CHERUBIM IN THE TEMPLE.

‘And within the oracle he made two cherubim of olive tree, each ten cubits high.’—1 *Kings*, vi. 23.

THE first point which we notice with regard to the presence of these mysterious symbols in the Temple, as distinguished from the Tabernacle, is the introduction of two new cherubim. Their colossal size is described in this and the succeeding verses: ‘And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubim were of one measure and one size. The height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of the other cherub. And he set the cherubim within the inner house: and they stretched forth the wings of the cherubim [the cherubim stretched forth their wings, *margin*], so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and the wing of the other touched the other wall; and

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their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.'

Mark their size—each ten cubits across from wing to wing. Now the oracle itself was not more than twenty cubits broad, as we see from the 20th verse. So there could only have been just room enough within it for these two gigantic figures, with their outstretched wings. Some are of opinion that the sacred cubit was 25 inches, while others do not think it exceeded 18 inches. At the lowest computation, therefore, the wings of the cherubim must have covered 30 feet, and they might have extended to nearly 42 feet. It is quite evident that these olive-wood cherubim were much larger than the golden figures which formed part of the mercy-seat, for this was only two cubits and a half long. As these colossal representations were overlaid with gold, their appearance must have been very grand. Indeed, it is distinctly stated in 1 Kings, viii. 6, 7, that there was ample room for the ark underneath these new cherubim. 'And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered the ark and the staves thereof above.' Now we are not to suppose that the Tabernacle was a higher type than the Temple, or that there was anything arbitrary in

Solomon's choice of the size or material of the articles constructed for his Temple. Was a pattern given to Moses when he was about to make the Tabernacle? So was it with Solomon before the building of the Temple. See 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12. 'Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof . . . and of the place of the mercy-seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit.' So, then, all was planned and carried out under the guidance of the Spirit of God.

Besides the two sets of cherubim in the oracle, the same emblems were wrought upon the cedar walls of the Lord's house, and upon the olive doors of the oracle, as well as upon the outer doors of the Temple, which were made of fir.

Let us now notice, first, the difference between the Tabernacle and the Temple in their typical bearing; and then inquire more particularly how this affects the truth taught us by the cherubim carved or constructed thereon.

1. The great difference between the Tabernacle and the Temple was this: The one was frail and perishable; the other strong and permanent. What a variety there was in the materials! Those of which the Tabernacle was constructed were boards of shittim or acacia wood, covered with curtains of fine linen, goats' hair, and rams' skins. The Temple was built of stone overlaid with cedar, while the whole of the inner part of the house was overlaid with gold.

The very purpose for which the Tabernacle was made shewed its temporary character. It was intended to be the centre of religious worship for the Israelites during their journey through the wilderness to the promised land. And therefore it could easily be taken to pieces and put together again. So the Tabernacle has become a figure of whatever is transitory or short-lived. It is several times used of our frail bodies in Scripture. St. Paul, in 2 Cor. v. 1, says: 'For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' And St. Peter, in his Second Epistle, (i. 3,) intimates, 'that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.' Accordingly, the Tabernacle is a very fit emblem of Christ's mystical body, while in a state of suffering and humiliation. This is what Stephen aptly terms (Acts, vii. 38) 'the church in the wilderness.' The Lord's people are pilgrims and strangers here. While the men of the world find their delights, their duties, and their rest here, and look upon this world as their home, the children of God are 'journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you.' They, like their Master, are not of this world. Their treasure is above, their hopes and aims are there; they look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. They are already enrolled as citizens

and freemen of the heavenly Jerusalem, and therefore they never forget that this is not their home. This is precisely what is typified by the Tabernacle: the Church one with Christ when He dwelt or tabernacled among us (John, i. 14) in lowliness. It is the Church Militant, encompassed by dangers, yet inhabited by the glory; it is the Church travelling, but each day drawing nearer to her heavenly home.

How different was the Temple! So far from being a moveable structure, it was made of great stones, and costly stones, firmly built on Mount Moriah, and intended to last from generation to generation. These durable materials and this fixed locality bring before us Christ in His glory. We see herein the Church Triumphant, the Church reigning with Christ in the kingdom which cannot be moved. Surely precisely this interpretation is alluded to in the prophecy of Isaiah, xxxiii. 20: 'Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.' The Temple is evidently the Church in its perfection, as bright, as immovable, as eternal, as her Head. It is 'in Christ' that 'all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.' (Eph. ii. 21.) Though in course of framing, it can hardly be termed a temple yet;—it 'groweth unto a temple.'

What we long for is to see the Church of Christ no longer tossed about by winds and waves, but safely moored in the haven of everlasting rest. In Solomon's Temple we discern the Peaceful One reigning over a reconciled people. We perceive the Bridegroom eternally united with His Bride. We see the Church no longer marred, but 'glorious, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.'

II. But what special doctrine do we gather from the position of the cherubim in the Temple, their increased number, and the material of which they were made?

When we see the cherubim upon the veil and curtains of the Tabernacle, we discern the redeemed to be one with Christ in His weakness and suffering. When the veil was rent, they died with their Master. When we look thereon, we know that all the ransomed are partakers of Christ's death. And when, by faith, we know all that is shadowed thereby, we also perceive that Jesus is one with us in our present pilgrim-condition. And although we go forth, like Abraham and Isaac, not knowing whither we go, yet we know that He who journeys with us will bring us to the city of habitation.

But all that is portrayed of the cherubim in the Temple brings vividly before us the children of God as one with Christ in His kingdom. The pilgrimage is now over, and the conquest is complete. The

height of the cherubim, their size, their symmetry, the gold with which they were overlaid, have all a bearing on the Church in its triumphant state. 'The tabernacle of God is now with men, and he dwells with them.' The saints are depicted as realizing that 'God hath made them kings and priests.' Their height shews us that the glorified saints have attained to a greater knowledge of the height and depth of the love of Christ than it is possible to reach here. The spiritual stature of those around the throne is infinitely beyond the stunted measure of grace which seems to satisfy most believers on earth. The cherubim in the Tabernacle were comparatively small. This indicates that Christ's Church is not complete now,—many more stones have to be gathered before the top-stone is placed. But just as the emblems Solomon constructed filled the most Holy Place, so will the perfect Church hereafter be 'the fulness of Christ's body.' (Eph. i. 23.) The heavenly mansion God has prepared for His people will, in some sense, be filled thereby. This must not be understood locally. The meaning is simply this, that not one of the Lord's chosen will be lacking when He makes up the number of his jewels. Not one grain of pure wheat shall fall upon the earth.

Again we read:—'Both the cherubim were of one measure and one size.' Herein we see the symmetry and harmony which subsist between the

various parts of the Church of Christ;—a truth which will be the more evident when we recognize what is typified by the twofold character of the cherubim. As there will be perfect development in all the branches of the Church hereafter, so there will be entire harmony. No longer will one grace be developed to the neglect of another. Jealousies shall no more mar Christ's image in His people. 'Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.' (Isa. xi. 13.)

One of their most marked characteristics was their outstretched wings. Their attitude was that of beings ready to fly on God's messages to the ends of the universe. When the children of God become 'children of the resurrection,' they will be 'equal unto the angels,' and they will do God's will as readily, as cheerfully, and as perfectly, as those bright creatures, whose happiness it is to minister to the heirs of salvation. The pinions need never be folded. Sleep and fatigue are unknown in that happy clime. The inhabitants serve God day and night in His temple. 'They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.' (Rev. iv. 8.) What the exact shape of the cherubim on the mercy-seat was we know not, nor is any mention made of their feet. But of Solomon's large olive-wood cherubim it is specially recorded in 2 Chron. iii. 13, that 'they stood on their feet.' In this they resembled the

seraphim ; only the latter had two wings for the express purpose of covering their feet. (Isa. vi. 2.) When we consider what is intimated in Eph. vi. 15 ;—‘your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,’ it would seem as if the feet intimated a willingness to walk as well as fly to accomplish their Lord’s commands. There will be no unseemly hurry about the ransomed, when they stand before the throne of God. They will then realize that it is sometimes ‘their strength to sit still.’ The wings are a much more marked characteristic of these living ones than the feet. This shews that swiftness is the natural element in which the glorified live and move. The laggart pace of the grasshoppers of earth has passed away for ever. The body which is raised in power soars upward, and ceases not.

The Book of Chronicles also informs us that ‘their faces were inward.’ Like the golden emblems, their look was toward the propitiatory. The believer continually keeps in view his ransom. Nor does he care to gaze out on the universe without Christ. What he delights to observe is God’s manifold and varied wisdom in dealing with His Church. How He moulded and redeemed it, how He upholds and feeds it, how He guides and delivers it, he desires to know. There is no subject so sweet to him as the justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying of that Church, which even now is spotless in the eyes of Him who shed His blood for it.

Nor must we forget to notice the material of which these cherubim were made. The olive-tree is ever a type of the unction of the Holy Spirit. Trees of oil shew the presence of this Blessed Teacher in His Church. In the fourth chapter of Zechariah, the two olive-trees are described as 'the two anointed ones which stand by the Lord of the whole earth.' We shall see, as we proceed, what ground there is for believing that these olive-trees are types of churches made lively and fruitful by the indwelling and teaching of the Holy Spirit. For if the olive-trees are the anointed ones, what else can be intended? To be anointed is to be filled with the Spirit of Christ. This is evident from 1 John, ii. 20: 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.' And verse 27: 'But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.' Indeed the olive itself is a type either of the believer or of a church in a flourishing condition. See the fifty-second Psalm, verse 8: 'But I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God.' Have, then, believers now some measure of the Spirit? In an unbounded degree this gift shall be theirs hereafter. The Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, and they in Him, they shall without effort bring forth all the fruits of the Spirit; 'love, joy,

peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' O how richly will this tree, which now buds, blossom and bear fruit in the kingdom of our God!

These cherubim were overlaid with gold. It is the Divine nature which gives believers their only beauty. And it is particularly that costly ransom, 'the blood of God,' which has been shed for their sakes. This is the gold wherewith Christ covers His Church. In this glorious dress they will never be ashamed. This comeliness will make them bright. All the preciousness of the Lord's people consists in this, that they are the subjects of redemption.

And here an objection must be answered which may present itself to the minds of some. The thought may arise, If even in the Tabernacle cherubim were constructed of this costly and lasting material, how could the Tabernacle be a type of the Church only in her period of humiliation? The truth is, that though gold has such endurance, what it chiefly typifies is Divine Ransom, and that was worked out for us by the suffering of the Lord Jesus. And it is a blessing of which we obtain the first-fruits while we are in the wilderness. Even here we are one with Christ in His propitiation, and 'now are we the sons of God.' All that the permanence of the gold typifies is the eternity of the redemption wrought out for us. (Heb. ix. 12.) The ransom has

purchased an eternal inheritance. So 'we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour.' (Heb. ii. 9.) The tribulation is overpast, the beginning of the victory is come. And just as Christ, 'for the joy set before him, endured the cross,' so must it be with us. A sight of the glory will lessen the grief. The reproach of Christ and His victory are so closely connected that they cannot be separated. 'It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him.' (2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.)

When we see the types of the propitiation in the Temple as well as in the Tabernacle, we are reminded that in the bright mansions of the Father's house Jesus will never forget the death by which He obtained His people's victory. Even in the midst of the throne He appears like 'a lamb as it had been slain.' (Rev. v. 6.) And the praise accorded Him by the chorus of the saved is pre-eminently on account of the love and mercy shewn in *redeeming* them. Of this suffering the Lord Jesus reminded John: 'I am he that liveth and was dead.' Spite of the olive-doors which partially formed the entrance to the Holy of Holies in the Temple, the veil was made afresh, like the one in the Tabernacle, and preserved at any rate in the Second Temple to be rent at the death of the Son of God. And

thus we are taught that in glory we shall never forget Him who redeemed us, and the road of suffering by which He brought us to the city of habitation.

There must have been a meaning in the name here given to the Holy of Holies. It is called 'the oracle.' It is the spot where God speaks with man. It is the point of meeting and of communion. There it was that Moses 'heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that was upon the ark of testimony, from between the two cherubim.' (Num. vii. 89.) And from thence Moses came forth to speak unto the people all that the Lord God had spoken unto him. God's message is to His Church: 'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.' Although many are called, few are chosen. For though the invitation is wide as the world, only those to whom it is given recognize and obey the voice of their Father. And so the limit of the Church forms the boundary-line of communion between God and man. The Lord has no fellowship with any others but those who believe His Word. He saith, 'My sheep hear my voice.' But if the converse of love between the Lord and His people is sweet now that we are in the outer tabernacle, how precious will it be when perfected in the presence of the King!

It must have been observed that there were four cherubim altogether in the Temple, when we add

the two golden ones to the two olive figures overlaid with the same costly material. This is exactly the same number that we find in Ezekiel and Revelation. The prophet beheld 'the likeness of four living creatures ;' and the beloved apostle also saw four living ones in the midst of the throne. We shall see that four is the number of perfect harmony and order. Just as in the new Jerusalem unity and compactness are typified by its four sides, and activity with largeness of heart by the fourfold aspect of the city, so will it be hereafter with the Church of Christ. But these perfections will distinguish the future Church—not the present. This strength and variety will characterize the host in its victorious rather than its militant condition.

But the oracle was not the only part of the Temple where cherubim were found. On the olive-wood leaves of the doors of the most holy place Solomon 'carved carvings of cherubim and palm-trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubim, and upon the palm-trees.' The same embossed work adorned the fir-tree doors of the outer sanctuary, as well as all the cedar walls of the temple. Also on the borders between the ledges of the bases of brass were 'lions, oxen, and cherubim,' and on the plates of the ledges were graved 'cherubim, lions, and palm-trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about.' (1 Kings, vii. 29, 35.)

Following the clue we have already obtained from Ezek. xli. 18-20, with regard to the working of cherubim on a plain surface, we can have little, if any doubt, that the lions and oxen here mentioned were parts of the cherubic emblem. Probably the first coupled-cherub consisted of the two faces, a lion and a man, both looking outward, and then a palm-tree was graven on the wood and next a coupled-cherub with the twofold faces of an ox and a man, and next, another palm-tree. There is little doubt that this order must have been observed throughout the house. We will not anticipate the typical meaning of the lion and the ox. The cedar is an emblem in Scripture of strength and fragrance. 'The Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of a high stature.' (Ezek. xxxi. 3.) Such growth and prosperity the Lord's choicest servants have. Of those who have drunk the streams from the flinty rock it may verily be said:—'The waters have made him great, the deep set him upon high.' 'The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.' (Ezek. xxxi. and Ps. xcii. 12.)

O beloved, if your root is by great waters then you will be like 'cedars in the garden of God.' Even now you may be 'like a green fir-tree,' (Hos. xiv. 8,) you shall have a perpetual freshness. But while the outer doors are fir, the inner ones are olive.

The nearer you get to heaven, the more fruitful you shall be. Moreover, the Temple walls were all cedar and gold; the cedar denoting strength, and the gold Divine ransom. And these very walls were covered with carved cherubim, cut out of the cedar, and embossed with the gold. What is proclaimed thereby? Is it not, 'the Lord Jesus mighty to save?' We seem to hear the Father crying, 'Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.' (Job, xxxiii. 24.) In the gold and cedar we see 'the Rock of our salvation,' and we perceive the might by which the Lord's darling was delivered from 'the power of the dog.' The palm represents the towering spirituality as well as the victorious success of the Lord's ransomed ones. 'In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' It is a lofty tree: those whose treasure is in heaven are the men that prevail. The Lord does 'plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah-tree, and the myrtle, and the oil-tree;' He 'sets in the desert the fir-tree, and the pine, and the box together.' (Isa. xli. 19.)

And how beautifully do the open flowers bring before us the development of blossom and fruit in God's garden! This world is full of buds of promise, many of which are gathered before they have time to expand. In God's paradise they are open flowers, and they neither wither nor die. The sweet glimpse thus afforded us of the many mansions of our Father's

house betoken that the trees of the Lord's planting not only shew richness of fruit, but also beauty of blossom, with fragrance of perfume. There are no rough, angular disciples in heaven. All display a winning attractiveness of character, which they have caught from gazing on Him who is Altogether Lovely. O to be in this spicy garden! For the fruit thereof would we not gladly bring a thousand pieces of silver?

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CHERUBIM IN EZEKIEL'S VISION.

'And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord.'—*Ezek. i. 26-28.*

IN the first and tenth chapters of Ezekiel's prophecy we have the fullest description of the cherubim which is to be found in the Word of God. It is at once magnificent and minute. It is one of the grandest portions of the Scriptures of truth. As we gaze upon the vision, we feel how heavenly is the atmosphere into which we have been caught, and seem to hear a voice saying, 'The place whereon thou standest is holy ground.' We feel that we need the manifold and perfect wisdom typified by

the seven eyes, or 'the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth,' ere we can apprehend or expound its mystic meaning. But as that sevenfold Spirit was not only seen 'before the throne,' but also 'sent forth into all the earth,' (Rev. iv. 5, and v. 6,) may we not look for His Divine teaching, so that the darkest passages may be radiant with that living light? '*Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.*' (Rom. xv. 4.) Surely this is a sufficient answer to those who urge that this is a portion of the Old Testament we were never intended to understand. The same apostle tells us, (2 Tim. iii. 16,) that 'all scripture . . . is profitable for doctrine,' and 'for instruction in righteousness.' Without, therefore, the clue to this vision, the man of God cannot be 'throughly furnished.'

Now in the closing verses of the first chapter of Ezekiel we have the summary of the whole vision. These plainly reveal that what the prophet saw exhibited was 'the glory of the Lord.' Not, indeed, its perfect image, for that were impossible for finite mortals to perceive, but 'the appearance of the likeness' thereof. Coupling this with what St. Paul tells us of the topic and purport of Scripture, we know that this vision must bring before us the Lord's glory, not in any abstract view, but in its bearing on those who are hereafter to shine with the glory, and to be changed into the same image.

There is a marvellous similarity between Ezekiel's vision of the cherubim and that of the living creatures recorded in the Book of Revelation. Both represent to us the glory, and both shew mysterious beings in the closest proximity to the throne. Nor is there a more striking point in the parallel than the fact, that both visions were vouchsafed in seasons of captivity. John was 'in the isle called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.' And Ezekiel was 'among the captives by the river of Chebar.'

St. John's vision was intended to portray the resurrection-glory of the Lord's redeemed, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. The purport of Ezekiel's vision is to shew the Lord's purpose of mercy towards the elect remnant out of Israel. We have the clue in chap. xi. 16-20: 'Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord God; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I

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'I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances; and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God. But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord God.'

Every word of this must be closely pondered and studied in connexion with what precedes. When Ezekiel first saw the glory, he was charged with a mission to the house of Israel, but reminded that it was a rebellious house. The message was:—'Ye have defiled *my sanctuary* ;' therefore 'I will make thee waste.' Through several chapters the prophet is commanded to declare the judgments that were coming upon the land on account of 'the detestable things' and 'the abominations' which the professing people of the Lord had introduced into His city and His sanctuary. In the eighth chapter we have the record of the manner in which the astonished seer was spiritually transported from the land of the Chaldeans to Jerusalem, and the four kinds of grievous idolatries which he witnessed, all of which were practised in the courts of *the Lord's house*. These abominations were so great that the Lord declared He 'should go far from his sanctuary.'

Next follow the six men, each with a slaughter

weapon in his hand, a type of the judgments the Lord was about to pour upon Israel. But before they commence their destructive work, the Man clothed in linen sets a mark upon all those that sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the land. Still the seer has no eyes to see *the Lord's true remnant*, nor power to perceive that in judgment God remembers mercy. As the courts are being filled with the slain, and as the ancient men topple heavily over one another, Ezekiel can only cry, 'Ah Lord God ! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem ?' Then he sees anew the grand vision of the Lord's glory above the cherubim, (in the tenth chapter,) and coals of fire are taken from under these living creatures and scattered over the city. The cherubim at last remain stationary 'at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house'—the very spot where the grossest sun-worship was being practised, and the glory, which had left them for a short season for the threshold of the house, departs thence, and stands over the cherubim. The five-and-twenty men who had turned their backs upon the temple of the Lord are still there, and while Ezekiel prophesies, one of their leaders, Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, a prince among the people, falls down dead. Yet the half-enlightened prophet persists, as he cries aloud, 'Ah Lord God ! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel ?' It is then that the Lord fully explains

to him who 'the remnant of Israel' is, and imprints this truth upon Ezekiel's understanding and memory:—'I shall remove my glory from the idolaters among you who profess to be children of Abraham, though they do not the works of Abraham. *They* shall be utterly cut off. But I have set a mark on the heads of my own believing people. *They* are the true remnant. Not a hair of their heads shall be harmed. I will manifest myself to them, will give them my Spirit, and will be their God.' There is great force in the prophecy:—'I will be to them as a little sanctuary.' It is one of the first forth-settings of the truth that the Lord did not mean to confine His glory to any particular spot. As the children of Israel had defiled His material sanctuary, He promises to be a spiritual sanctuary to those who would trust Him. And when we link on the vision of the cherubic glory, which is so closely interwoven with these prophecies, with such express explanations of God's purposes, we are forced to the conclusion that the Lord further intended to teach: 'The world exists for this believing remnant. I will not only protect them from all danger, but at last unite them to myself, and cover them with my glory. Yea, I will make them my instruments of carrying out my great designs, both of judgment, wrath, and mercy.'

Let us next notice a few points in the vision recorded in the first chapter, now that we are convinced of its general bearing. The 'whirlwind

came out of the north,' and probably it was from the same quarter that the 'great cloud' appeared, and the 'fire infolding itself,' and the 'brightness' round about. The north was with the Hebrews typical of darkness and secrecy, just as the south portrayed warmth and light. There is at first a darkness about all God's purposes. They are quite hidden from the world; and sometimes they are concealed from the eyes of His own people. And the brightness comes from the least expected quarter. Man looks to the south. The Lord's whirlwind and fire come from the north. And it is worthy of notice, that the appearances of the cherubim are always connected with the revealing of mystery. God's purposes towards fallen man were unknown till this symbol appeared at the gate of Eden. What God had reserved for the residue of Israel was hidden till this wondrous sight was granted to the seer by the river of Chebar. And in Christ's revelation of Himself and the future glory of His Church by His servant John, the living creatures were discerned by him almost as soon as 'a door was opened in heaven;' and directly the seals were broken, the voice of the same living ones was heard crying, 'Come and see.'

Out of the midst of the brightness was seen 'the likeness of four living creatures,' endowed with singular properties and powers, who were mysteriously connected with the glory of the Lord. In fact, they

and the Divine glory make up one compact vision. The two cannot be disentangled. The appearances must be studied as a whole. Among the ruling ideas which characterize the vision we distinguish three :—

- I. The throne.
- II. The appearance of a man.
- III. The life.

Chief in the subordinate rank are to be recognized :—

1. The rainbow.
2. Two marks of the Spirit of God.
3. The colours.
4. The wheels.
5. Their sound.

I. 'Above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone ; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.' The same in chap. x. 1. He who sits thereupon in the likeness of a man can be none other than the Lord Jesus, in the body of our glorified humanity. He it is whom Daniel saw : 'And behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall

not pass away, and his kingdom that which sh—— not be destroyed.' (Dan. vii. 13, 14.) We see ~~him~~ Christ not suffering, but reigning. Precisely ~~The~~ the same is seen by St. John in Rev. iv. 2: 'And, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.' It is this very chapter which represents the living creatures as 'in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne.' Indeed the word 'throne' is mentioned no less than twelve times in this chapter, besides the word 'seats' in the 4th verse, which should be translated 'thrones.' It is the first object which meets the eye of the apostle when he is caught up into heaven: 'a throne set in heaven.' Thereby we know that victory is the principal topic of the Book of Revelation. Whose victory? 'The battle is the Lord's,' and so the victory is the Lamb's. 'A crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.' And when we read, 'a crown *was given*,' we know that what is meant is not the royal authority which the Lord Jesus had from all eternity, as co-equal with the Father, but the mediatorial kingdom which He shall hereafter receive as His inheritance. 'We see not yet all things put under his feet.' When will that period arrive, and when will Christ be victorious over every enemy? When the elect are gathered in, and they sit down with Christ as assessors on His throne. For this St. John was prepared by the last words he had heard from his Master, in the message

to the Seven Churches, almost *immediately before* : 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.' (Rev. iii. 21.) Directly after this he sees a throne, 'and round about the throne four and twenty thrones, (Gr.), and upon the thrones four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold.' Adverting to the promise just given, what else could the wrapt seer understand, save that he beheld the representatives of the victorious church, clad in royal and priestly attire? Twelve of them must have symbolized the twelve tribes of Israel, as represented by their heads, the twelve patriarchs ; and twelve doubtless represented the Gentile Church, the heads of which are the twelve apostles. For did not their Master say unto them, 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and *sit on thrones*, judging the twelve tribes of Israel?' Nor are they to be the only rulers. St. John saith to all the servants, 'I also am your companion in the kingdom of Jesus Christ ;' or rather, 'a partaker with you of the kingdom.' (Rev. i. 9.) So we read in Dan. vii. 22 : 'And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.' The apostle looks on. He sees in the very midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures, precisely similar

in their main characteristics to those Ezekiel witnessed. Can he doubt that he sees fresh symbols of Christ's victorious ones? The angels needed not to struggle and to conquer. And in the subsequent chapter (v. 11) they are expressly distinguished from the elders and the living creatures. Nor would the chosen disciple be perplexed to see distinct emblems of a new side of the same blessed truth. He had heard the Master compare the children of the kingdom in their earthly career to good seed, to a merchantman, to good fish, perhaps to goodly pearls. And he knew that the Saviour had likened His waiting people successively to ten virgins, to good and faithful servants, and to sheep. What wonder that He should represent them first as elders, and then as living creatures of varied form, yet all seated upon thrones? So in Ezekiel. The bright and sapphire throne is above the heads of the cherubim, yet it is closely connected with them; it moves when they move; and if for a very short time the glory leaves them, it returns again almost immediately to its former resting-place. So when we compare Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation, we know that we see here the saints one with Christ in His victory. There is no fear lest you should fail, believer. You share in the tribulation, you know what the patience means, and you shall partake of your Lord's glory. You 'shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of your Father.'

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II. The next ruling idea is 'the appearance of a man.' What a world of truth was thus conveyed to the children of the captivity! They expected an Anointed Saviour, but knew not that He would be both God and man; that though bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, He would have a right to sit royally 'above the firmament.' The whole vision powerfully sets forth 'God manifest in the flesh.' For the glory is said to be 'the glory of the Lord' — 'the appearance of the likeness thereof.' And yet He who sits upon the throne has the appearance of a man. The human nature would not be brought into such prominence in the vision were it not for a special purpose. It is as the glorified God-man that we see the Lord Jesus seated upon the throne—as the Head of His Church—unalterably one with those whom He has ransomed. Christ humbled Himself to be man that He might exalt men to be princes. Truly when we view His marvellous condescension we are constrained to exclaim with David, 'And is this the manner of the man, the Lord God?' For thus may 2 Sam. vii. 19, be translated.

That there was a point of identity between the cherubim and Him that sat upon the throne is evident from Ezek. i. 5: 'And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.' The face of a man is also the first mentioned in i. 10: 'As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man.' So, however composite their shape, the human nature was

predominant. We also read in *v.* 8, 'They had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides.' This is repeated in chap. **x.** 8 and 21. On these human emblems rested the appearance of the Lord's glory. Ezekiel's cherubim were therefore symbols of men one with Christ in His conquest and in His glory, just as the cherubim in Exodus are symbols of men one with Jesus in His redemption. In the whole vision we discern Emmanuel—God with us. How great the honour the Lord put upon sinful flesh when He took upon Him our nature! This *likeness* He assumed, though He Himself knew no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. (Rom. viii. 3.)

III. Another pre-eminent idea throughout this vision is that of Life. The appearances he saw Ezekiel terms 'living creatures.' So in the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters of the Revelation, the word 'beasts' should be translated 'living creatures.' For ζῶον is quite distinct from θήριον, the word for 'beast' in Rev. xiii. &c., which means wild beast. Some are of opinion that both Hebrew and Greek might most accurately be rendered 'living ones.' And it is remarkable that the same word in the Hebrew (נִזְמָן) is translated 'congregation' in Ps. lxviii. 10. It should be 'thy living one.' The psalm in question speaks of Christ's resurrection and ascension-glory: it tells of the golden hue which will light on the ransomed captives, and of the Lord

God dwelling among the rebellious. If, therefore, in all these visions 'the living ones' is the title peculiarly applied to these expressive symbols, what are we drawn to infer? Christ is the Life. He is Life Eternal. And to whom does He impart life? Who are the special recipients thereof, throughout the whole of the Word of God? The life is for dead sinners, in order that they may pass from death unto life. Angels are never spoken of as the receivers of this life. It is '*the world*' that God so loved, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' (John, iii. 16.) It was to earthly listeners that John the Baptist cried: 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life.' (John, iii. 35.) It was to earthly disciples that John the Evangelist wrote: 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.' (1 John, v. 12.) The earliest type of the Lord Jesus Christ was 'the tree of life' in the midst of the garden. That tree is afterwards alluded to in the closest connexion with the cherubim.

The flaming sword, which like a glory hovered above them, was placed there in order 'to keep the way of the tree of life.' We know that this tree must have been a type of Christ; because in Rev. xxii. 2, we read of the same;—'the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit

every month : and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.' Now, the nations cannot be healed without Christ. 'In him was life; and the life was the light of men.' (John, i. 4.) He is 'the Living Bread which came down from heaven.' And mark what is added: 'If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' (John, vi. 51.) Christ's life is then intended for them that believe; it is given for the life of the world. And those who eat His flesh and drink His blood, (that is, who are spiritually made one with Him by faith,) partake of His life. He is the Rock whence the living waters flow. What could so well typify life, as those creatures which were selected for the purpose? The lion is the strongest animal to subdue, the ox is the mightiest to endure, and the eagle soars highest among birds; while man was made in the image of God, after His likeness. These four bring before us the highest forms of natural life. And all united, as in Ezekiel, they make one living creature. Indeed, their eyes and their wheels, their faces and their wings, their colours and their sound, all exhibit fulness of life.

The pre-eminent truth in these emblems is therefore life for the dead, and life from the dead. Man had sinned; his life was forfeit. Then Love from above came down to take upon Him life, and to pour it forth; so that guilty beings might know the full

meaning of the words, 'a life for a life.' Jesus cries to sinners: 'I am come that they might have life.' 'The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.' Nor is the vitality imparted to the stricken ones a poor flickering thing, that may at any moment be extinguished. 'I am come, that they might have it more abundantly.' The life given to the believer is full and plenteous as Christ's own. Nay, the life he lives now is no longer his own; he can say, 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' Nothing short of 'the life of Jesus is manifest in his mortal flesh.' The Church is Christ's body, 'the fulness of him that filleth all in all.' Not only does it receive of that fulness, but it *is* His fulness. As this is the case, what limit is there to the power of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Church, even now? And what bounds has He set to the conquests of His people? Their power should be unlimited as His own, and it *is* as unlimited whenever they use the grace that is ready for them. 'These have power to shut heaven, so that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.' (Rev. xi. 6.) Such power has been exercised by Elijah, and Moses, and Joshua, and Paul. And why not again?

The renewed man does not merely live a Christ-like life. It is the very life of Jesus Himself within

him. By the power of His Spirit Christ constrains his thoughts, prompts his words, and energizes his acts. Wherever that blessed Spirit is not resisted the disciple is most nearly 'perfected as his Master.'

And if even here so rich and continuous a stream of life proceeds from the fountain, even from the glorified God-man at the right hand of the Father, how inconceivably beautiful will be the resurrection-life, when body and spirit are cleansed from every remnant of sin, and when the sons of God are made entirely like unto Jesus, because they see Him as He is! Does not, then, this radiant vision of Ezekiel, instinct as it is with the quintessence of vitality in its swiftly-moving, bright-glancing, keen-seeing, high-soaring forms, exhibit to us the saints of the Lord as they will be when they enjoy the grandest developments of physical, intellectual, and spiritual life? Whatever fulness Christ has, is theirs; it is all to be lavished on His own.

Every particle of these beings seemed to breathe and move, and yet all in completest harmony with the will of the body. With regard to the wheels it is specially mentioned in x. 17, 'The spirit of the living creature [margin, 'spirit of life,'] was in them.' So is it with the weakest member of the body of Christ: the life by which it acts is part of the life of the whole; 'every joint supplieth' its share of the symmetry and activity, and there is an 'effectual working in the measure of every part.'

The despised and unnoticed saint is as fully alive as those 'whose praise is in all the churches.' And his work cannot be dispensed with; for the apostle urges: 'Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.' (1 Cor. xii. 22.)

After these three, which are the most prominent points in the vision, the throne, the manhood, and the life, we come to those features which may be regarded as of secondary rank in the picture.

1. The first I shall mention is the Rainbow. 'As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.' The same was one of the first objects which John saw, in the parallel vision of Rev. iv. As soon as he had observed the throne, and Him that sat upon it, and the colour which distinguished him that sat thereupon, he looked again; 'and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.' For the meaning of the rainbow we must look back to its first mention in Genesis, ix. 13: 'I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.' The rainbow is therefore the token of the covenant; and wherever the rainbow appears, it is an emblem of a covenant which the Lord makes, or renews between Himself and the earth. The thought is, mercy in the midst of judgment. And though sometimes the deliverance is temporal, and some-

times spiritual, the truth is the same. That we are warranted in this application of the type of the rainbow is evident from Isa. liv. 9, 10: 'For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.' The earthly deliverance after the flood is therefore the type of a heavenly ransom; and the rainbow always forth-figures the covenant of peace. The promise in Ezek. xi. 19, 'I will put a new spirit within you,' is exactly the same as that in Jer. xxxi. 31-34. And this last is introduced by the words; 'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.' The Lord makes a covenant with reference to earthly blessings with the world. But when He means to bestow spiritual gifts, the covenant is with His Church alone. He had an elect people in Israel, and He declared that He would guide, protect, pardon, and sanctify them. It is thus, by comparing the eleventh chapter of Ezekiel with the first, that we discover the meaning of the rainbow. When the cloud of wrath descended upon the idolaters among the prophet's brethren and

kindred, the bow of mercy and hope shone forth for those who hated the abominations which were done in the land.

2. We next notice two marks of the presence of the Spirit of God: 'Their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps.' The meaning of this is given us in Rev. iv. 5: 'And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.' The lamps of fire and the burning coals, therefore, typify the One Perfect Spirit of God. That the seven Spirits mean the Holy Spirit is clear by comparing Rev. iv. 5 with Rev. i. 4.

It is, then, the presence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit that gives the Church all its beauty and its glory. Similar appearances are mentioned in other parts of Scripture. When God made a covenant with Abram, 'behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces' of the victims he had been commanded to sacrifice. (Gen. xv. 17.) We further read in Ezek. i. 13, with regard to the appearance of lamps, that 'it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.' 'The appearance of fire' is mentioned again in v. 27, as characterizing the Son of Man. It can have been none other whom Daniel saw, (x. 6,) whose 'face was as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire.' We see the purifying nature of

holiness thus depicted. This is 'the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning' which is to purge the blood of Jerusalem. (Isa. iv. 4.) And in proportion as the Church becomes like her Divine Master she will hate sin, and aid in carrying out the Lord's judgments against the ungodly. This is typified in x. 7, when 'one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took thereof, and put into the hands of him that was clothed with linen; who took it, and went out.' The saints will hereafter judge the world, and judge angels; (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3;) they will pronounce sentence on the unbelievers, and be the instruments in carrying it out. These coals of fire, we gather from Ezek. x. 2, were to be scattered over the city. They are the Lord's judgments descending on those who are mixed up with its abominations and not grieved by its sins. We have the closest analogy to this in Rev. viii. 5: 'And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.' The angel here mentioned is the same as the Man clothed with linen:—the Lord Jesus. And whenever the Church is filled with the Spirit of Jesus, she becomes like unto Him.

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of these emblematic existences we find in their numerous eyes. Ezek. x. 12: 'And their whole body, and

their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had.' The rings alluded to in i. 18 must probably have been the circumferences or felloes of the wheels. And of them also we read, 'their rings were full of eyes round about them four.' The meaning of this is also given us in Rev. v. 6: 'A lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.' So the eyes bring before us the Spirit of God in His awaking, teaching, and enlightening work. They are 'the seven Spirits of God *sent forth into all the earth*.' There is, moreover, an intimate union between Christ and the Holy Spirit. The eyes are the eyes of the Lamb, and yet they typify His Spirit. The Church is Christ's body, *His* fulness, and yet 'the habitation of God through the Spirit.' In Christ is fulness of knowledge and of wisdom ; and all this is stored up in Him for His Church. All that is Christ's is ours. Therefore St. John says to believers: 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.' (1 John, ii. 20.) When we read of the cherubim, 'their whole body was full of eyes,' we cannot fail to be reminded of our Lord's words in Luke, xi. 34: 'The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light.' In proportion as we walk in the light we realize the present efficacy of the ransom wrought out for us by

Christ Jesus, and thus His blood cleanseth us from all sin. How full and abounding is this light! The living creatures in Rev. iv. 6, 8, were 'full of eyes before and behind,' also 'full of eyes within.' Where the presence of the Spirit of the Lord is largely felt and realized, the people of God know the past and the future. All of them know something of their own deceitful hearts; and, as they grow in tenderness of conscience, they see that their own wills are gradually being subdued to their Master's. To have the whole body full of light, and 'no part dark,' is a standard not in its highest sense attainable here. These emblematic beings represent to us the light of God's Spirit at a period when no resistance or hindrance shall be offered by the waywardness of man. *Then*, the back being full of eyes, the believer will be able to discern all the path by which God led him through the wilderness with no other emotion but of praise and thankfulness. The remembrance of his own sinfulness, and his gradual awakening, from the period when 'the whole head was sick and the whole heart faint,' will no longer fill him with alarm or dismay. He knows that all his sins are swallowed up in love. His hand is full of eyes; for to him to see and to carry out his duty are identical. Nor does he know any other duty but the will of his Covenant-God: this he delights to perform. His action is so swift, so instinctive, and so sure, that it seems as if his

very hand had a visual faculty. It is at once so tender and so strong. Their wings are also full of eyes. What so full of wisdom and discrimination as the spirituality of the perfected believer? By this faculty he continually soared upward, when on earth. Even then he seemed upborne 'by the wings of the great eagle,' the Lord Jesus, until the time came when the same mighty power drew him to meet his returning Saviour in the air. And now that he has reached the resurrection-state there seems no limit to his soaring. Nor does he travel a whit faster than he sees or understands. There are eyes on his wings; and, as he rises, all the domain of the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, of the love of Christ, is spread before him, until he is filled with all the fulness of God. There are eyes on the wheels likewise. There is wondrous rapidity about all the movements of glorified saints. 'The living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.' And there is subtlety of apprehension, as well as swiftness, about the method by which such, now made 'equal to the angels,' execute their Master's desires in proclaiming His Gospel or declaring His judgment.

Some of these glorious types will doubtless be realized by God's people in the millennial period; but at whatever season of the past or the future they are exhibited, 'all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit.' It is He who draws the saints to

consider Jesus. Doubtless is the truth taught by Zech. iii. 9 : 'Upon one stone shall be seven eyes.' The One Stone can be none other than the Lord Jesus. He is the Chief Corner-stone, and the only foundation that can be laid. Now upon this One Stone the Seven Eyes of the Spirit are fixed. He leads believers to look at Jesus, and Jesus only. And as they look, wisdom is given them in order to understand the character and beauty of their Apostle and High Priest. Precisely the same interpretation is given to the eyes in Zech. iv. 10 : 'Those seven ; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth.' How complete is the unity of the Lord and His people ! These are Christ's eyes ; they indicate the presence of His Spirit ; and they are the Church's wisdom.

3. Nor must the colours discerned in this vision be neglected. Three of the five are almost identical. Ezek. i. 4 : 'Out of the midst thereof' [*i. e.* out of the midst of the self-infolding fire, and the brightness that was about it,] 'as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.' This is mentioned again in connexion with the throne, and 'the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it,' in *v.* 27. 'And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward.' This is again noticed in *viii.* 2 : 'brightness, as the colour of amber.' Now

whether we take the Hebrew word Chashmal, (חַשְׁמָל) here used, to mean the resinous gum which bears the name of amber, or the compound metal called by the Greeks electron, four-fifths of which were made of gold, the colour remains the same. The next is like unto it. Of their feet it is stated that 'they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.' (i. 7.) Exactly the same appearance was observed by Daniel (x. 6) when he saw the Man clothed in linen: 'His feet like in colour to polished brass.' So when John saw the Son of Man, (Rev. i. 15,) 'his feet' were 'like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace.' Our Lord calls attention to this characteristic in His call to the Church at Thyatira, in Rev. ii. 18: 'These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass.'

A third colour closely akin to the two former is described in Ezek. i. 16: 'The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl.' The same was observed by the prophet in the second vision in x. 9. And in Dan. x. 6, He whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz had 'his body like the beryl.' Now it is generally believed by scholars that the stone alluded to here was the golden-coloured topaz, or chrysolite. Now all these three are closely akin to flesh colour, particularly the amber and the beryl. And these two distinguished the body of Him who was seated above

the throne, as well the vision as a whole. In all cases the burnished brass characterizes the feet, whether of Christ or of the cherubim. The conviction, therefore, deepens upon us, that we behold here the Son of God made man. We see Christ taking our nature upon Him, and becoming one with man, in order to redeem him. And we discern emblems of redeemed man, in the closest connexion with the Godhead and the Royalty.

Another colour was conspicuous in the near horizon. ‘The likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched over their heads above.’ (i. 22.) Nothing can be clearer in crystalline beauty than God’s character. Terrible as it seems to man in his imperfect condition, it may be said of each of His words and ways; ‘they are all plain to him that understandeth.’ (Prov. viii. 9.) When the elders who were with Moses and Aaron saw the God of Israel, there was ‘under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.’ (Exod. xxiv. 10.) Doubtless the same truth is taught by the ‘sea of glass like unto crystal’ that was before the throne, which is mentioned in close connexion with the living creatures in Rev. iv. 6. Perfect transparency will characterize God’s people hereafter. They will ‘know even as they are known.’ The atmosphere which they breathe will be so pellucid as to render a lie or an evasion impossible.

And the same sapphire colour which Moses perceived in the revelation of God is described by Ezekiel, (i. 26,) 'Above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone.' Exactly the same is noticed in x. 1. In an earlier chapter we have recognized that blue symbolizes what is heavenly. The whole vision is a revelation of mysteries. And it is an exhibition of the glory of the saints as they 'sit together' [with their Lord] 'in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' It mainly contemplates the future, when sorrow and trouble are overpast, and, sharing full redemption and complete righteousness, God's loved ones share their Saviour's throne.

4. We have already briefly touched on one of the most singular points in the vision—the wheels which were connected with these symbolic existences. These are fully described in Ezek. i. 15–21, and x. 9–13, also 16, 17. It would seem as if the prophet gradually apprehended the nature and movements of these accompaniments of the cherubim. First, he observed, and 'behold one wheel.' In the next verse, 'wheels' in the plural are mentioned, and he sees that 'their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.' Then, the seer gazes till he notes their 'four sides,' and that 'they turned not when they went.' The 'rings' or felloes rise before him 'so high that they were dreadful.' They are part of the living creatures,

moving when they move, rising when they rise, and instinct with the same life. ‘Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.’ Wonderful swiftness seems the chief truth taught by this part of the symbol. We cannot now conceive the rapidity with which the Church of Christ will hereafter carry out her Redeemer’s commands, whether they are for mercy or vengeance. What will be entrusted to the victorious saints we gather from Rev. ii. 26, 27: ‘And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.’ In entire harmony with this promise the living ones sing: ‘Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.’ In the millennial period the saints will preach the gospel. This is particularly prophesied of the Jews. See Isa. lxvi. 19: ‘And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles.’ In this the saints will be ‘equal to the angels,’ and we know how rapid, almost

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instantaneous, their movements are. 'Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.' In fact, the wings and the wheels shew us, that whether the living creatures wish to move in space or on matter, it is done instinctively and with ease. There will not be a moment's hesitation or delay about ought the glorified saints desire. And they will understand practically the meaning of the petition, 'Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.' And as angels minister to saints now, hereafter saints will perform works of service for angels. 'To the principalities and powers in heavenly places the church will make known the manifold wisdom of God.' (Eph. iii. 10.) And in all this the tardiness, the weight, and the oppression, alike physical and spiritual, which clog God's people here when they would fain labour untiringly for Him, will be for ever banished. Weakness will be changed for power; and the ebullient life which is imparted to them will be felt in every muscle and pore.

5. The only other characteristic we can touch upon now is their sound. This is described in i. 24, 25: 'And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down

their wings. And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings.' Although they utter no articulate language, the sound of their wings seems like the voice of the Almighty. It is exactly what Christ's voice resembled in Rev. i. 15: 'His voice as the sound of many waters.' There is a unity and a responsiveness about the voice of Christ and the voice of His Church. Whatever they utter, it is as if He spake it; for their very yearnings are the groanings of His Spirit. (Rom. viii. 26.) The same is heard proceeding from the hundred forty and four thousand, who have their Father's name written in their foreheads, described in Rev. xiv. 1-3. Their voice is 'as the voice of many waters,' and they are expressly said to sing the new song, which only those can learn who are redeemed from the earth. The same sound is heard from a great multitude in heaven in Rev. xix. 6. And the meaning of the expression 'waters' is given in Rev. xvii. 15: 'The waters which thou sawest, . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.' The sound of the living creatures is therefore that of a multitude of the redeemed from among the nations of the earth. And all is in the language of Canaan. They have learned it from the Pattern Man, the Second Adam, who represents and leads His people. 'The voice of his words was like the voice of a multitude.' (Dan. x. 6.) He speaks for those whom He

represents. He is one with them according to His prayer, 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.' (John, xvii. 23.) It is evident, then, that the redeemed will at last compose 'a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.' They will all utter one voice. Discord and jealousy will have fled away for ever. One mighty throb of exultation and thankfulness possesses that vast company. They have no need to ask, for they possess. How loud the voice with which they cry, the 'salvation [belongeth] to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb!'

Redeemed brethren and sisters, how great are the privileges which await us

'When we stand with Christ in glory,  
Looking o'er life's finished story !'

The life of weakness and sin will soon be finished.  
The life of strength and holiness will shortly begin.  
Nor can any emblems fully represent to us the joy,  
the fulness, and the power of that endless life.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE TWOFOLD CHARACTER OF THE CHERUBIM.

‘Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.’—*Zeck.* iv. 14.

ONE of the questions which arises in connexion with our subject is this, Why were these *two* cherubim on the mercy-seat? And why was the same number brought into special prominence in Solomon’s Temple, when, although the additional figures of olive-tree together with the golden cherubim made up four altogether, still there were *two pairs*, each distinct in their material and size?

It is very evident that duality pervades all nature, and underlies much of the truth of the Word of God. It was said in the beginning by God, that it was not good for man to be alone; and so two are united by the marriage covenant, man and a help-meet for him. Under the same figure Christ sets forth His affection for the Church, which He loves and cherishes. Two is the number for fellowship, while four represent strength and compactness. It was for communion and mutual help that the

apostles and the seventy were sent out two and two. For 'as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.' Fire is kindled and enthusiasm roused when two friends, like Jonathan and David, strengthen each other's hands in God. The body is composed of two sides, each with an eye, an ear, an hand, a foot, exactly answering to each other. So we have the type and the antitype, the shadow and the substance, the pattern and the reality. There were two tables of the commandments, and two covenants.

Professor Max Müller, in the address he lately delivered before the International Congress of Orientalists, acutely observed that 'All human knowledge begins with the Two, or the Dyad, the comprehension of two single things as one.' The Lord Jesus, as the Last Adam, has repaired the mischief wrought by the First Adam. Every saved soul has had two husbands: the law, which is dead, and 'Another Man,' who is alive, even Christ. (Rom. vii. 1-4.) Solomon may well say, 'Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to lift him up.' (Eccles. iv. 9, 10.) When man fell, there was One ready to lift up his fellow, even the same who had become our Brother. Verily He is 'the Second Child, that shall stand upon his stead.' (Eccles. iv. 15.)

As, therefore, God has ordained 'true yoke-fellows' in every department of creation to bear each other's burdens, and given to each member of the pair his sphere and his vocation, there must be some special meaning in the twofold character under which the cherubim are so often represented. And as we cannot doubt that they typify the redeemed, what are the two great divisions of the Church of Christ which are intended by this emblem? What are the two principal hosts of that mighty company? We shall find great help towards answering these questions in the fourth chapter of the prophet Zechariah.

It will aid us,—

I. To discover the distinct and overwhelming proof that Scripture affords on this subject.

II. It will give the clue to incidental hints of a similar character in various parts of the Word of God.

III. It will be found to be full of profitable matter for our own soul's food, and our own spiritual instruction.

As we search, may we taste of the fatness of the olive-tree, and thus be made true 'sons of oil,' (margin), full of the unction from above.

I. That there is something peculiar about this vision we perceive from its introduction. 'And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.'

Even though the prophet's ear was more lively, and his eye keener than that of other men, he needed a fresh awakening. And it is very possible that this typifies a reference to events that are to be realized when we awake from the sleep of death, to share our Master's resurrection-glory. The angel addressed the prophet, 'What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.' This was evidently the likeness of the seven-branched candlestick in the Holy Place, with the form of which Zechariah must have been familiar. Now in answer to his first inquiry, 'What are these, my lord?' the prophet was informed: 'This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' So we see clearly that this is a vision of the Spirit. It reveals truth regarding His presence with the people of God. But Zechariah desired more precise and definite information regarding the purport of the emblems he had seen. See *vv.* 11-14. 'Then answered I and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive-branches which

through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.' So the bowl of the candlestick seemed to be supplied by two golden pipes, and these pipes again to be fed by two olive-branches, which thus carried the oil from the two trees of which they formed part direct to the centre of the candlestick. Now we have a very clear reference to this prophecy in Rev. xi. 3, 4: 'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.' It is very certain, therefore, that the 'two witnesses,' 'the two olive-trees,' and 'the two candlesticks,' must be identical. And what appeared one candlestick to Zechariah, is called 'two candlesticks' by St. John. And in this very Book of Revelation we have the meaning of the figure. In Rev. i. 20 we read: 'And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.' If, then, seven candlesticks are seven churches, two candlesticks must be two churches; and two olive-trees must also mean two churches. And the candlestick that appeared one, yet seven-branched, but in some sort two, must typify the perfect Church of the Lord Jesus, composed of two great divisions, yet one in

Him. And we gather from the passage in Zechariah that the two olive-trees are identical with the two olive-branches, and both with 'the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.' These two anointed ones must therefore be churches also, and churches that walk in the light of their Redeemer's countenance. The 'sons of oil' are they who drink in the unction of the Spirit. Nor can we help connecting these two sons of oil with the 'two cherubim of olive-tree' [or of trees of oil, margin] in the Temple of Solomon, which literally stood by the Presence of the Lord of the whole earth. What different truths, then, are taught us respectively by the candlestick and the olive-tree? In the candlestick we see the power of the Holy Spirit to enlighten the heart, and to shine out of darkness. In the olive-tree we trace the power of the same Spirit to fertilize and fructify. Whatever life or fruitfulness the Church of Christ possesses, it is all wrought by the indwelling of His Spirit. And the oil which supplies the wants of the Lord's people is living oil. Thus we have the Church of Christ in two aspects. In the olive-tree we see her full of life and growth; and in the candlestick we perceive her 'shining as a light in the world, holding forth the word of life.' (Philip. ii. 15, 16.) And we observe that there is the closest connexion between the Church as the Life and the Church as the Light; because, were there no 'pure oil olive beaten for the light,' it could not

‘cause the lamp to burn always.’ (Exod. xxvii: 20, 21.) Nor could the Church have a particle of life or light, were it not for her close union with the Spirit of Him who is the Life and the Light. But as she has ‘eternal life abiding in’ her, she becomes both life and light by virtue of that Divine indwelling. Thus we understand the words, ‘I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one.’ (John, xvii. 23.)

But the bowl of the golden candlestick, which supplied the seven branches, seemed to be fed from *two* olive-trees, by two olive-branches, which appeared to be united to two golden pipes. So here we have a Church which is twofold and yet one. As the candlestick is one and seven, to set forth a perfect Church, one in Christ, exhibiting unity in diversity, so two great divisions of the Church of Christ which is practically one must be represented by the two olive-trees supplying one candlestick. Nor can we doubt the answer to the inquiry, ‘What are these?’ will solve the problem of the duality of the cherubim.

Nor does Scripture leave us in the dark as to the meaning. In Jer. xi. 16 we read: ‘The Lord called thy name, A green olive-tree, fair, and of goodly fruit.’ He is speaking of ‘the house of Israel and the house of Judah.’ And we have a very striking and apposite passage in Rom. xi. 16-24, in which the Jewish Church and nation is

compared to 'a good olive-tree,' and the Gentile Church to 'an olive-tree wild by nature,' (vv. 17, 24,) which is grafted into the good olive-tree, and 'partakes of its root and fatness.' What imagery could more exactly correspond to the vision of Zechariah? Here we have two olive-trees, yet by grafting made one. And in Zechariah we have two olive-trees feeding one candlestick. But in the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul expressly tells us that they typify the Jewish and the Gentile Churches. Undoubtedly these are the two great divisions of the Church of Christ. The first is what Stephen calls, in Acts, vii. 38, 'the church in the wilderness,' as it widened and grew under judges, kings, and prophets. The second is that 'kingdom of heaven' which is 'like unto a net, which was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.' The first olive-tree was the Church of the Old Testament, which was of Abraham's stock, yet which occasionally absorbed outsiders, from the time of Hobab the Kenite and Naaman the Syrian. The second olive-tree is the Church of the New Testament, which, though first composed of Jewish disciples, and propagated by Israelite apostles, has become in so predominant a measure Gentile, that only a small remnant of the seed of Abraham has been incorporated therein for the last 1800 years. In Heb. xi. we have the great company of 'elders' described as witnessing and being witnessed of. For both ideas seem incorporated in the *κιαστυοήθησαν* of v. 2, and

the *μαρτυρηθέντες* of *v.* 39. They were 'made witnesses,' and thus 'obtained a good report,' 'God testifying of their gifts' and lives. In *v.* 13, also in 39, 40, we see this elder Church longing for the blessings she was to receive by union with the younger body. Its members 'died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them.' They 'all obtained a testimony through faith, and yet received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.' But it is in the Epistle to the Ephesians that this is set before us as God's great mystery—'the mystery of his will,' (*i.* 9,) 'the mystery of Christ,' (*iii.* 4,) 'that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.' (*iii.* 6.) So far, then, from the Church taking its origin from the day of Pentecost, the Gentiles are here distinctly said to be '*of the same body*' as the Jewish Church. The Greek, if possible, gives greater emphasis to this: *τὰ ἔθνη συγκληρονόμα καὶ σύσσωμα, καὶ συμμέτοχα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας*, &c. 'Joint heirs, joined in body, and joint partakers of the promise.' Nothing can be clearer than the illustrations and assertions of the same which we have in the second chapter of the same epistle, verses 14 to 16. 'For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between

us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.' Christ has 'made both' Jew and Gentile 'one;' they are no more twain, but 'one new man;' they are reconciled unto God 'in one body.' The truth is stated and restated in every variety of word and aspect, that there may be no mistake about its bearing. So in *v.* 18: Ye Gentiles are 'fellow-citizens with the saints;' ye belong to the same city as they, 'the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all.' (Gal. iv. 26.) Ye too 'are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,' which rests upon Jesus Christ as its 'chief corner-stone:' 'In whom *all* the building groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.' It was doubtless with reference to the disputationes between Jew and Gentile that the apostle reminds the Ephesian Christians in the fourth chapter, that there is 'one body and One Spirit,' 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism.' And he had the same object in view when he set before them that the gifts of the Spirit were granted 'till we *all* come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' This might better be translated, 'the fulness of the Christ,' *i. e.* the Christ which is made up

of the Head and the members, which it evidently means in 1 Cor. xii. 12. 'The perfect man,' therefore, the full and complete Christ, is composed of that mighty company, both of Jewish and Gentile believers, who will be gathered in by the fourfold ministry alluded to in Eph. iv. 11—a ministry in which the Spirit dwells mightily, and works variously. This period will not arrive till 'the dispensation of the fulness of times,' when God will 'gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.' (Eph. i. 10.)

The same truth is taught by the passages of Scripture which bear on the marriage of the Lamb. The ideas have been successively broached of late, that the Gentile Church alone, and more recently still, that the Jewish Church alone, is the Bride of Christ. But when *all* the portions which illustrate this beautiful emblem are considered together, the student of Scripture will be convinced, that just as 'the Christ' would not be complete without the feeblest of His members, as He needeth 'that which *every* joint supplieth,' so the Marriage of the Lamb would lose part of its glory if one great host of those whom the Lord 'loves with an everlasting love' were excluded from the nuptials. That the Jewish Church forms an integral part of the Bride is very clear from such passages as Isa. liv. 5: 'Thy Maker is thine husband;' Hos. ii., where the Lord calls

nslef Israel's 'first husband,' and when it is mised of that nation in the latter days, 'Thou It call me Ishi ;' that is, My husband. Notice ticularly verses 19, 20 : 'And I will betroth e unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee o me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in ingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth e unto me in faithfulness ; [This Dr. Margoth translates, 'I will betroth thee unto me by h :'] and thou shalt know the Lord.'

That the Gentile Church constitutes also a portion he Bride is quite evident from 2 Cor. xi. 2, where converts from heathenism at Corinth are thus tressed by the apostle: 'I have espoused you to , husband, that I may present you as a chaste gin to Christ.' Nor can this be overlooked for a ment when the same inspired writer points out rist's love for His Church as an object to animate , hopes of believers at Ephesus. 'Christ loved , church, and gave himself for it ;' and His love it is specially compared to the love of the husband the wife. 'This is a great mystery : but I speak ickening Christ and the church.' Nor can we ubt that this 'glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing,' is partly composed of ntile converts. We are irresistibly reminded of , forty-fifth psalm, a song of loves : 'The king's ighter is all glorious within : her clothing is of ought gold.' It is the same material of which the

candlestick was made. And the verse that follows is :—‘ She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.’ The idea is identical with that in Rev. xix. 8 : ‘ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.’

Both Jew and Gentile, therefore, constitute the Bride ; for as ‘ both are reconciled to God in one body,’ both must be included in the Shulamite, or Reconciled One, of the Song of Solomon, which is so sweetly redolent of Christ’s affection for His people. However many millions they may amount to as individuals, there is a unity about the Bride of the Lamb which is specially insisted on in the words, ‘ My dove, my undefiled, is but one ; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her.’ (Song, vi. 9.)

The identification of ‘ the two witnesses’ of Rev. xi. with the two cherubim does not necessitate a complete exposition of that chapter. They have been regarded as exhibiting lines of independent testimony to the truth by some of the ablest writers on the Apocalypse. And there is nothing recorded of them which militates against that view. ‘ They shall prophesy.’ This was a condition of the Church as a whole longed for by Moses : ‘ Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets !’ (Num. xi. 29.) It has been distinctly predicted by Joel : (ii. 28:) ‘ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will

pour out my spirit upon all flesh ; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions : and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.' The period of their prophecy, 'a thousand two hundred and threescore days'—is probably still future, and if so, it must be literal days, not years. It will be a time of sorrow, for they will be 'clothed in sackcloth.' And though they have always had the unction from above, during that season of conflict and yet of might, in a special sense they will stand before the God of the earth, and reflect the light of His countenance. Nor is it strange to suppose that fire will destroy their enemies, or that they will have power to shut heaven. Such authority has been granted to the Lord's people before ; and the Master Himself testified : 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also ; and greater works than these shall he do ; because I go to the Father.' (John, xiv. 12.) And this is in exact conformity with what we read in Ezek. x. 7 of a cherub taking fire and putting it into the hands of Him that was clothed with linen. And it precisely accords with the last mention of the cherubim in Scripture, in Rev. xv. 7 : 'And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.' Mr. R. C. Morgan

observes, in his very suggestive paper on 'the Two Witnesses': 'Whether their testimony be of love or of judgment, it is still like fire, and it is to God a savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish. In this manner only must their enemies be killed; not by carnal weapons, not by returning evil for evil, but approving themselves as the ministers of God, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.\*

A time will come when all the servants of God who are then alive will have 'finished their testimony,' and then the Church will be for a time extinct upon earth. It is said that the beast 'shall overcome, and kill them.' Most probably, the opposition to God's truth will reach its height at the same moment when the Lord's people are withdrawn. If suffered to remain on the earth, they would be exposed to the hottest fires of persecution. But He saith, 'Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.' (Isa. xxvi. 20.) Then the beast kills the Church, *as a Church*, for the nominal Christians who are left after the first great rapture of the saints are not allowed to testify. There is yet the husk or corpse of

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Christianity left, but there is no witnessing. On this Mr. Morgan pertinently remarks: 'What is the meaning of the people's not suffering their dead bodies to be put into a sepulchre? The religious world will have and hold the form of godliness while it denies the power. Every evangelical *ism* is the form which some true and living testimony for God has taken. Even Romanism is the dead and corrupted body of a once living witness of Jesus Christ. The dead world loves its own, and while it has always persecuted the true and faithful witnesses, it will not suffer their dead bodies to be buried.' It would seem as if those converted during this period of great tribulation were *single* and *isolated* witnesses, and not formed into any corporate body. But at the end of three days and a half (probably three years and a half) the Spirit of life will enter into them, and there will be again a united courageous witness for Christ, which will strike awe into the world. It is most probable that a second rapture of the saints just before the Millennium is portrayed by the 'great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither; and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.' But on these points I would not dogmatize. The Lord will unseal the mystery in His own time.

II. The incidental hints in various parts of the Word of God which confirm this interpretation

are of great interest and value. The first is to be found in Jacob's history. When he was returning from Mesopotamia 'the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim:' according to the margin, 'two hosts, or camps.' Now, why did he speak of *two* hosts? Almost immediately afterwards, Jacob's fear of Esau leads him to 'divide the people that was with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into *two bands*.' Here, too, the same Hebrew word is used as before—Mahaneh. The two bands are two hosts; and the spot may doubly be called Mahanaim. The thought in the mind of the patriarch was evidently this:—'Here are two great hosts of the Lord, one composed of His angels that do His pleasure, and the other of His weak servants below, who yet are strengthened to be His soldiers.' And then the thought struck him, 'How prudent to make my own host a double one, to divide my band into two companies, that if Esau has an injurious purpose, one at least may escape!' But surely we have a foreshadowing here of the spiritual Israel, composed of the Jewish and Gentile hosts, of which St. Paul has said, 'All Israel shall be saved.' 'For they are not all Israel which are of Israel;' but 'Abraham is the father of us all;' 'the children of the promise are counted for the seed.' (Rom. xi. 26; iv. 16; ix. 6, 8.) It was always meant that many might 'surname themselves by the

name of Israel,' who 'should have his faith, though not lineally descended from him.

The next passage is in the Song of Solomon, vi. 13. The Song represents the affection of the Lord Jesus for His Church, under the names of Solomon and Shulámi, or the Shulamite, which mean the Reconciler and the Reconciled One. In this sixth chapter, not long after the Royal Bridegroom has informed us, 'My dove, my undefiled, is but one;' He declares she is 'terrible as an army with banners.' And as the daughters of Jerusalem see her departing, they cry, 'Return, return, O Shulamite, that we may look upon thee.' Some of the better instructed among them rejoin: 'What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.' Here, too, the word is Mahanaim. The Lord Jesus is the Peace-bearer; and those who receive His message of peace are reconciled to God. Thus, by His imparted righteousness and strength, as well as by the robe with which He covers them, they become fresh as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as a bannered host. There is an attractiveness about believers which leads those who are half-awakened to turn and gaze upon them. And as the world gazes, the Church of Christ resolves itself into two great companies, the elders of the old covenant and the witnesses of the new.

Another type is given us in 'the two wave-loaves of two tenth deals' which were offered by the

Israelites at the Feast of Pentecost. Nothing could be more appropriate to the Feast of Firstfruits than to present unto the Lord the first baked bread that was gathered in, and that of the finest flour. We have the antitype to this in the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The mighty company which was added to the Lord when the day of Pentecost was fully come were the spiritual firstfruits which had been prefigured ever since the first Israelite stood in the Tabernacle door with his basket of fruit, and cried, 'A Syrian ready to perish was my father.' The first wave-loaf was, so to speak, Jewish. For several years the only converts made by the preaching of the apostles were of 'the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' Doubtless it is to this that St. James alludes, when, writing to converts from among 'the twelve tribes which were scattered abroad,' he says: 'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.' (i. 18.) And St. Paul seems to speak of himself and his fellow Hebrew believers, when he says to the Ephesians (i. 18) that it was God's counsel 'that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.' There is an evident transition in the following verse, where the apostle adds; 'in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth.' For though Jewish believers might be considered '*a kind of firstfruits*,' the gospel before long was received by thousands of Gentiles,

who thus answered to the second wave-loaf. Indeed, all those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, and are caught up to meet Him in the air, make up in the fullest sense 'the general assembly and church of the firstborn.' These, doubtless, are those described in Rev. vii. 1-8, and Rev. xiv. 1-5, as 'having the seal of the living God in their foreheads,' and as 'following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.' 'These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.' But in Rev. vii. 9-17, the great multitude of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who came out of the great tribulation, bring before us the antitype to the Feast of Tabernacles, the full ingathering of God's people which will be made during the period of His severest judgments.

There is one other aspect of the duality of Christ's Church to which we must briefly advert. In the prophecy of Zechariah, our Lord is represented to us under the twofold type of Zerubbabel, the King or Civil Governor, and Joshua the High Priest. For we read, (in vi. 13,) 'He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both:' *i. e.* between the priesthood and the kingship. It is in this two-fold character that He whose name is the Branch builds the Temple. It is thus that He gathers out the living stones, by the power of His atoning

sacrifice and the might of His victorious sway, each manifested in the believer's heart, and makes them 'an habitation of God through the Spirit.' It is thus only that 'all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.' For every one must be perfected as his Master. And the key-note of the Revelation is:—'He hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.' (Rev. i. 6.)

III. There are several practical thoughts which naturally occur to a child of God as he meditates on this portion of His Word.

1. The first is, that Churches derive their life, power, and fruitfulness, from the presence and working of the Spirit of God. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' (Zech. iv. 6.) The Churches of Christ are peculiarly 'the anointed ones.' Whatever grace, or knowledge, or spirituality they have, comes from above. However fair a Church may be outwardly, it has no life unless it is a son of oil. Its organization may be perfect, and its ritual decorous, but if it lacks unction it will not be a means in the Lord's hand of quickening the dead. If you would have wisdom to understand all mysteries, and skill to search out the deep things of God, if you would know the love of Jesus, and be mighty to conquer sin, you must be a son of oil. This divine unction will give you power

in prayer, so that 'ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' It will support you and render you victorious in temptation. It will carry you safely through the dark valley, and minister to you an abundant entrance into God's everlasting kingdom. You who are His are anointed to be both kings and priests; you are 'more than conquerors through him that loved you.' And you are enabled to offer before God continually the sacrifices of prayer and praise. There is no true test of a living Church but this:—Is it anointed?

2. The position of these sons of oil shews privilege and fellowship. While the wicked call on the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, the anointed ones '*stand* by the Lord of the whole earth.' They are not abashed, for they are complete in Christ. Because He lives, they live also. He is their representative within the veil. They have been quickened together with Christ, and they do not fear. What sweet communion is brought out in the thought that they '*stand before the God of the earth!*' (Rev. xi. 4.) Christ's people are ever gazing at His countenance and sitting down under His shadow with great delight. And as they always behold His face, they at length reflect His image. In some measure this is true of believers now, but it will be far more perfectly realized hereafter. The constant loving fellowship between the reconciled child and his Father will then be

unbroken by any stain of sin, or shadow of a cloud.

3. The symbol makes it clear that the two churches thus prefigured afford mutual aid to the one body, and by the proportion which each renders bestow harmony and comeliness upon the whole. 'They, without us, could not be made perfect.' Nor we without them. The twain make up the one new man. The wisdom of the Hebrew and the comprehensiveness of the Greek were needed to make a perfect church. The Hebrew needed our width, and we lacked their self-consecration—their entire surrender to the service of Jehovah. There are two olive-trees, yet they feed but one candlestick. So far from there being a Church of Christ which excludes the Jew, the body is incomplete without his presence. 'For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.' (1 Cor. xii. 13.)

4. The future of the Jewish Church must accordingly be of the deepest interest to us. When 'the fulness of the Gentiles is come in,' the veil will be taken away from Israel, and then so great will be the blessing which will accrue to us, that 'the receiving of them will be life from the dead.' (Rom. xi. 15.) 'Their fulness' is to come. And the apostle argues, 'If the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches

Gentiles, how much more their fulness !’ xi. 12.) The choicest fruit will be gathered Israel is reconciled and saved. Now only a t believe ; but a new dispensation will shortly ace, when ‘ Israel shall blossom and bud, and face of the world with fruit.’ (Isa. xxvii. 6.) vident from Isa. lxvi. 19, 20, that the con- Israelites will be missionaries to the world the period of millennial blessedness, when ord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and isalem, and before his ancients gloriously.’ xiv. 23.) For the Lord saith, ‘ They shall my glory among the Gentiles.’

tual sympathy and aid are the chief laws of urch of the Lord Jesus. The more we im- r Master’s spirit, the more ready we shall be our fellow-travellers on their pilgrimage to evenly Zion, and the greater will be the self- which will induce us to bestow all our riches , and knowledge, and substance, at the feet of en and ascended Lord, to be laid out and used n for the extension of His Church and the of His Kingdom.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THEIR QUADRIFORM CHARACTER.

‘Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.’

‘As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.’—*Ezek. i. 5, 6, 10.*

THE number four is evidently of great significance in the principal visions of the cherubim. Both in Ezekiel and in Revelation four living creatures were seen in vision. In Ezekiel *each* had four faces and four wings; each also had four sides, and, evidently, four wheels, so that they could move in every direction straight forward. But in Revelation each of the living creatures had a single characteristic, and some importance is given to their order. ‘The first living creature was like a lion, and the second living creature like a calf, and the third living creature had a face as a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle.’ (Rev. iv. 7.)

rom the individuality of this symbolism we should ather that the Church of Christ, at different periods f her history, has resembled, or will resemble, in urn the lion, the calf, the man, and the eagle. rom the emblems of Ezekiel we are drawn to onclude that the Church of Christ as a whole, and very great division of it, has a fourfold character. For should it be forgotten that the golden cherubim hich formed part of the mercy-seat, and the olive-ood cherubim above them, made four altogether. What, then, are the fourfold characteristics of the ord's Church, and why were these particular faces elected? However difficult this part of our subject may seem, if we are full of eyes, enlightened by the idwelling and unction of the Divine Spirit, we shall e able to understand it.

I. What strikes us first is, that these four creatures represent the highest forms of animal life. It as a Jewish proverb: 'Four are the highest in ie world; the lion among wild beasts, the ox mong tame cattle, the eagle among birds, man mong all creatures: but God is supreme over all.' What can better typify spiritual as well as natural fe in its highest aspects? The Church is composed f the living ones. 'He that hath the Son hath fe' even now—a life which is hid with Christ in God. Hereafter, in spirit, soul, and body, all that Christ's will be his. The close connexion between

the realization of all that is typified by these symbols and Christ Himself must be particularly noticed. The Father has specially made a grant to the Son, that He should have 'life in himself;' and all that life He lavishes upon 'the church, which is his fulness.' Therefore, in an especial degree, all these animals typify the Lord Jesus. What distinguishes the lion is strength and courage. For 'what is stronger than a lion?' It is for this reason that Judah is specially compared to a lion in Gen. xlix.9. And the Lord Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, for there is none so mighty to forgive, none so strong to punish. It was He who prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. None can stay His hand, nor say unto Him, What doest thou? The ox is the emblem of patient self-sacrifice. It labours willingly for man in its life, and cheerfully yields itself up for slaughter. No one has shewn such marvellous self-denial as Emmanuel. Self-sacrifice was exhibited throughout His life, and reached its climax at His death. Swiftness is the mark of an eagle. Of Saul and Jonathan it was said, 'They were swifter than eagles.' (2 Sam. 23.) And as the bird soars heavenward, it is natural to believe that spirituality is an important element in the type. In a pre-eminent sense the Lord Jesus is 'the Man *from above*.' He is that 'great eagle' whose wings sustain and accelerate the flight of His Church, when she escapes into the

wilderness. (Rev. xii. 14.) While on earth, in heart and mind He soared upward towards that heaven from which He sprang. The man, in his choicest development, has sympathy and tenderness. And he is made in the image of God. All this sympathy the Lord Jesus put on. For He is 'very Man.' In all these respects He has set before us the highest example and the most perfect pattern. How wondrous a Man He was ! Richly endowed intellectually, possessing the keenest and the most sensitive affections, holding the key to every human heart, and having the greatest wisdom in dealing with individual souls. Then, His whole life was a crucifixion of self: a constant endurance of contradiction and suffering, an accomplishing of His Father's will. And yet, though 'a Man of sorrows,' His God had anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows. (Ps. xlv. 7.) His eye was ever on the crown ; and He rejoiced with a joy unspeakable when He saw of the travail of His soul, and was satisfied.

Now the Church of Christ, and every member of it, must resemble her Head in all these points. And though the perfect standard cannot be reached now, yet 'when we shall see him we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is.' (1 John, iii. 2.) Even now, some measure of this resemblance is wrought out by the working of His Spirit : 'because as he is, so are we in this world.' (1 John, iv. 17.) And our Saviour said of His disciples, 'every one shall be

perfected as his Master.' (Margin of Luke, vi. 40.) The method of being perfected in our case is the same as in His. As He 'lived by the Father,' and was upheld by Him, (John, vi. 57, and Isa. xlvi. 1,) so we live by an eye fixed on Jesus, deriving new supplies of life and strength and wisdom from Him.

The true Church of Christ has, therefore, all these characteristics :—

1. The likeness of the Man, as made originally in the image of God, and new created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. iv. 24.)
2. The likeness of the Ox, in the spirit of patient endurance and self-sacrifice even unto death.
3. The likeness of the Lion, in strength to conquer sin, and in a triumphant fearlessness on behalf of Christ.
4. The likeness of the Eagle, in a spirituality and loftiness of character, which continually soars upward to that heaven which is its eternal home.

Nor need we despair of being brought nearer to this ideal. Are we needy, empty creatures? The Spirit rests on the Lord Jesus entirely for us. All these gifts He is eagerly desirous to transfer to His people, in proportion as they are made willing to receive them. For if we are one with Him, members of His body, what is there which He will keep back from us? He will fill us with strength and courage to witness for His name; He will make us patient to wait and work for Him, and able to give up all for Him or

His people; He will impart the sympathy and kindness of speech and action which He Himself so signally displayed, and He will show us where our true position is, in heavenly places with Him, and that we need not stay grovelling in the world, held back by sin like a heavy weight, but that we ought to be mounting upwards quickly and joyfully, with our eye steadfastly fixed upon our home, where He is.

II. There is a very old tradition that the four wing creatures typified the four evangelists. At first it might be supposed that this is contradictory to the view (which we know to be true) that they symbolize the Church. But the opposition is only apparent. And this idea, when closely examined, only confirms the truth to which we have been led. For each of the Gospels gives us a new aspect of our blessed Lord. And precisely in proportion as the Church sees Christ in all His variety and beauty depicted in His Word, does she grow in grace and effectiveness. It was generally supposed by the fathers that,—

1. Matthew was represented by the Man, because he speaks of the human generation of the Messiah.
2. Mark was figured by the Lion, because he sets forth the Royal dignity of our Lord.
3. Luke was typified by the Ox, because he treats of the Priesthood of the Saviour.

4. John was characterized by the Eagle, because his Gospel is the most spiritual and heavenly in its tone.

According to this view, the Gospels severally exhibit Christ as Man, King, Priest, and God. Matthew's is the gospel of the Incarnation, Mark's that of the Resurrection, Luke's of the Passion, and John's of the Ascension of the Redeemer. This is the ancient tradition. But it appears to me that Matthew, rather than Luke, gives the sacrificial character of the work of Christ. If so, he should be symbolized by the Ox. And Luke gives special prominence to His human sympathy. This marks him out as the Man. As in all these things the Church is fashioned like unto her Head, it may be said that she grows in grace and wisdom as she gazes upon Him:—

1. In His sacrificial character, as apprehended by St. Matthew. The Son of David.
2. In His triumphant success, as portrayed by St. Mark. The Lion of the tribe of Judah.
3. In His human sympathy and tenderness, when delineated by St. Luke. The Son of Man.
4. In His divine and heavenly origin, as painted by St. John. The Son of God.

If, therefore, in any sense the four Gospels and their writers answer to these great symbols of life, it must be simply because they represent four great phases of saintly experience, four chief divisions of

one great army. Different individuals are drawn to study different aspects in the character of the great Teacher. And at various periods in the history of the Church she has been induced, either by heresies within or by fightings without, to study with peculiar care His divinity, His manhood, His passion, His resurrection, His ascension, or His return. Neander has some acute remarks on the fourfold stamp impressed upon Christianity from a very early period, which is exemplified primarily in the four Evangelists, and secondarily in the four great writers of Epistles. He says, 'The mode of apprehending and presenting that divine truth, which is one in essence, must, at this point, be immediately separated into four grand particular directions, constituting all together the fulness of Christ, as will be evident by comparing the different characters of James and Peter, Paul and John.'\*

The chief topics of the Epistle-writers may thus be summarized and compared with the Evangelists:—

1. James resembles Matthew, and represents Christ as the Fulfiller of the Law. The Ox.
2. Peter resembles Mark, and represents Christ as Joyful and Victorious. The Lion.
3. Paul resembles Luke, and represents Christ as the Brother. The Man.
4. John (in Gospel and Epistles) represents Christ as the Beginning. The Eagle.

\* Neander: *History of the Church*, ii. 3.

Of 'God's unspeakable gift,' as well as of every other, it may be said, 'Whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.'

III. Another important truth which is brought before us by the quadriformity of the cherubim is the compactness and harmony of the Church of Christ. 'Four is the symbol of God's creation in orderly and regular arrangement; so there are four corners of the earth, four seasons, four divisions of the day (morning, noon, evening, midnight), four watches of the night.\*

The holy Jerusalem depicted in Rev. xxi. is particularly stated to be 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife.' All that is recorded, therefore, regarding its symmetry, or gates, or foundations, must portray the comeliness and perfection of the Church of the Lord Jesus, *when ready for Him*; for she is 'prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.' (xxi. 2.) Now, in the 16th verse, we read: 'And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.' This evidently depicts to us the symmetry and beauty which will hereafter characterize the mighty host that shines with the glory of God. Ambrose Serle observes in his

\* Appendix to Miss M'Lachlan's *Notes on the Book of Revelation*, p. 279.

*charis*, 'God's Church is, as to object and appointment, designated, both numerically and formally, not by an irregular figure, but by a perfect mathematical square; that is, emblematically, a garden, not common: it is represented under the idea of an enclosed, guarded, cultivated field of inheritance, not wild unappropriated waste for which nobody cares.'

A similar idea is brought before us in Eph. iv. 1-16, where St. Paul shews that a fourfold ministry is needed for the full development of the Church of Christ. 'He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' Not, indeed, that apostles are needed in every period of the Church's history; for in Rev. xi. 14, we read that in the twelve foundations there were the names of twelve apostles only—'the twelve apostles of the Lamb.' They laid the foundation, and in a certain sense composed it themselves, Jesus Christ being the Chief Corner-stone. Next to the apostles are prophets, who are not confined to any particular age. They are those who have a special message of the Lord. The evangelists offer the gospel to the masses of heathen, whether at home or abroad. And pastors or teachers will always be needed to feed the flock of Christ which He has gathered out to be a people unto Himself. It is thus that 'the whole body is fitly joined together and

compacted by that which every joint supplieth.' The weakest babe in Christ must do his part to contribute towards the perfection of the whole. We thank God that in the present day a more elastic ministry has been called into action by the wants of the times, which is helping to form a stronger and more compact Church. Lay agency is welcomed in every variety of co-operation with the pastors and teachers of the Church of Christ. And men are sought out with special gifts to draw and influence those several classes whose peculiar employment or isolation from their fellows, or alienation from heavenly influences, makes it needful that the whole heart should be concentrated on their recovery. There is no one incorporated into Christ's Church who does not learn the sacred duty and high privilege of ministration. 'None of us liveth to himself.' Every one who has been thoroughly healed goes home to his friends and tells them what great things the Lord has done for him.

Another illustration of this is given us in the veil of the Tabernacle, which was hung upon four pillars of shittim-wood overlaid with gold, and these set upon four sockets of silver. So the ministries, in their fourfold form, are the great supporters and edifiers of the body of Christ, which is shadowed by the veil. The apostles are particularly likened by St. Paul to pillars. (Gal. ii. 9.)

And the four living creatures, facing four dif-

ferent directions, and moving every one of them straight forward, evidently represent the Church in the millennial period, when she will be made Christ's instrument in preaching the gospel to the four corners of the earth, for His elect will be gathered from the four winds. What a contrast between our present condition and our future! Now how slow are we to move on holy errands! What hindrances lie in our path! But the living creatures move every one of them straight forward. There is an ease and a rapidity about their movement which we cannot but envy. O happy are they who have light-tipped shoes, shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, always ready to speak of the peace which dwells within their own breasts! The Church need not be so unwieldy even now. It ought to possess a greater adaptability and swiftness. Did her members realize the worth of souls, and the nearness of eternity, they would not lose so many precious opportunities of saying a word for their Master, and winning souls to Him.

IV. But it will also be inquired, What do we learn from the order in which the four living creatures are represented in the Book of Revelation? Why does each possess a special characteristic? This inquiry is closely connected with the standards of the children of Israel in their journey through the wilderness. The host was divided into four

camps: the camp of Judah on the east side, which set forth first; the camp of Reuben on the south side, which set forth in the second rank; the camp of Ephraim on the west side, which went forward in the third rank; and the camp of Dan on the north side, which went hindmost. Mr. Baxter, in his *Prophecy the Key of Providence*, (p. 19,) observes: 'What the figures upon the standards were is not told us in Scripture, but the Jewish traditions cited by Mede, (*Key of Revelation*, p. 31,) and referred to and adopted by Bishop Newton, (*On the Prophecies*, p. 314,) declare the figure of a lion was on the standard of Judah; the figure of a bullock on that of Ephraim; the figure of a man on that of Reuben; and an eagle on that of Dan.' There are several passages in Scripture that confirm this. Those already cited from Gen. xlix. 9, and Rev. v. 5, distinctly connect the lion with Judah. In Deut. xxxiii. 17, Joseph, who is identical with Ephraim, is compared by Moses to a bull: 'His glory is like the firstling of a bullock.' The reasons for linking Reuben with the man and Dan with the eagle are not so self-evident, but they are worked out most ingeniously by Mr. Baxter, whose views as to the order of the living creatures typifying the four chief dispensations are of great interest, and deserve the closest investigation. It is very certain that the Jewish dispensation is over, and that 'blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles

be come in.' Ours, then, is the Gentile dispensation. To this will succeed the millennial state, and after this we expect a fourth, or resurrection dispensation. On this point I shall make no apology for giving copious extracts from Mr. Baxter's valuable work. 'Judah is the symbol of the Jewish dispensation ; Judah being the acknowledged head of the tribes, and having retained the sovereignty till Christ came.'

'Ephraim, the son of Joseph, we shall see to be the symbol of the Gentile dispensation. He was cast off by his brethren, and cast into the dungeons of Egypt : he was exalted by God and set over the Gentiles, dispensing bread in the midst of famine, and his brethren came bowing down to him to beg of him the means of sustaining life. In all this we have a generally acknowledged type of Christ ;—rejected of the Jews, going down under death, exalted again in the resurrection, and dispensing through the Holy Ghost the Bread of Life to the nations ; and such of the Jews as are spiritually alive come to Him for bread. In the substitution of the sons of Joseph—Ephraim and Manasseh in the place of Joseph—we have another type of a change of dispensation, in which two would be substituted for one—the Jew and Gentile for the Jew. So in the placing of Ephraim before Manasseh, the younger before the elder.'

'Reuben, the first of the twelve patriarchs, fell and

was rejected, and yet he is prophetically marked as the firstborn, and to be restored to favour, to "the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power." Thus is he a fit type of that dispensation wherein the love of God toward His people Israel shall be vindicated in recalling them from their degradation, and exalting them above all other nations; according to the prophecy of Micah, iv. 1, 2.'

'It is said of Jesus, (Col. i. 18,) that He is "the beginning, the firstborn from the dead." In the same sense it is said (Rom. viii. 29) "that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." When, therefore, the "excellency of dignity" is ascribed to Reuben, it implies the possession of the throne; and the "excellency of power" implies the possession of *all* power; and in this full sense the fulfilment will only be found in the resurrection-state wherein it is promised; (Rev. iii. 21) "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne;" and wherein Christ saith, (Matt. xxviii. 18,) "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." . . . In these particulars, as the firstborn, as the excellency of dignity and excellency of power, Reuben's prophetic character points to the risen God-man, the Father's King and glory, the resurrection-state in which Christ is manifested, as in all things having the pre-eminence. (Col. i. 18.)'

‘Looking, then, to Reuben as a type of the dispensation of the Church, we find the characteristics of a state of things yet future, wherein Christ, the foundation of the Church, will not, as under the Jewish dispensation, speak only as a Prophet; nor yet, as under the Gentile dispensation, intercede only as a Priest (Acts, iii. 22; Heb. viii. 1) at the right hand of the Father, for His Church, trodden down by the world; but will, as Prophet, Priest, and King, in the excellency of dignity and excellency of power, reign and rule in the Church of the firstborn, the heavenly Jerusalem; and shall be as described in Zech. xiv. 9, “The Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one;” and the new song shall be sung, “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

‘Dan’s prophetic character points us to the era of judgment and salvation for which “all creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain.” (Rom. viii. 22.) Jacob, in the spirit of prophecy, looked forward to the day of judgment; speaking of which he uses the name of Dan in its typical meaning, the antitype of which will be Christ sitting in glory in the judgment-seat. The patriarch, beholding the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, (Rev. v. 11; xx. 12: Matt. xxv. 32,) of angels and risen saints assembled before the throne, exclaims,

“ I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord !” (Gen. xlix. 18.) This is the fourth and final dispensation. Judah was the representative of Christ the Prophet ; Ephraim, of Christ the Priest ; Reuben, of Christ the Resurrection King ; and Dan, of Christ the Judge.’

We cannot forbear adducing a few more proofs from the same source :—

‘ In the going forth of the Jewish Church, the power and slaughter of the *lion* fitly symbolized her progress. As in Jacob’s blessing, so in the progress of the Jewish people, from their calling out of Egypt to their full possession of the promised land, they went forth conquering and to conquer : “ From the prey, my son, thou art gone up : he couched as a lion, and as a young lion ; who shall rouse him up ? ”

‘ In the going forth of the Gentile Church, how different ! Not now, as a lion, to take a prey, but as an *ox* or a *calf*, to bear the yoke. The Gentile Church came forth suffering, oppressed, and trodden down, giving itself to the yoke, as an *ox* that is sent forth to sow beside all waters ; (Isa. xxxii. 20;) and as a *calf* to be offered up on the sacrifice and service of faith. (Philip. ii. 17.)’

‘ In the going forth of the Millennial Church, which is symbolized by the *man*, we shall see manhood perfected and glorified. . . This dispensation comprises that period wherein, according to Scrip-

ture, the Church shall rule and reign, and occupy that place in the earth which was assigned to man before he fell to have dominion over all. The Jewish Church, though not trodden under foot by the kings of the earth, yet never prevailed beyond the Jewish nation. The Gentile Church, though it embraces the whole world, yet is trodden underfoot by the powers of the earth, and neither gives laws to the kings nor exercises any universal sway over the people. The Church has never yet taken that place in the world which was assigned to man—"have dominion." For this state of the Church the fit emblem is man.'

'In the going forth of the Resurrection Church, the *eagle* is so manifestly the appropriate symbol of the soaring from earth to heaven, that nothing need be added.'

'Thus we seem to gather the full expression and meaning of the four beasts of Revelation, four living creatures of Ezekiel, and four camps of the Israelites.—"The Church and people of God," out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and gathered from the beginning of time to the end of the world, are symbolized in all.'

The fact we have already observed, that in Ezekiel's temple every cherub had two faces, the face of a man and of a young lion, (Ezek. xli. 18, 19,) seems to corroborate this view. What was most important for the Jew to keep in mind was his own symbol,

the lion, and that of the millennial state, the man. Thus the ox was often omitted, although it is called specifically 'the face of a cherub' in Ezek. x. 14, and the representation of the Jew in his completeness bridged over 'the times of the Gentiles,' with one foot, so to speak, on his lionlike youth, and the other on the dominion of his manhood. Israel conquered under Joshua as the young lion, but he will have peaceful and universal sway under the Lord Jesus, as the Pattern Man. The young lion, therefore, perpetually faces the portraiture of the man, and the palm-tree of victory is between them. Thus renewed Israel is ever looking forward to the time when 'out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' (Isa. ii. 3.)

The time approaches when greater harmony and activity shall characterize the Church of the First-born, when no longer in scattered companies, but in a compact and symmetrical host, they shall march through the wilderness towards their heavenly home, with every eye upon their Commander, and every heart beating in perfect unison with His commands; when the love they bear to Him who ransomed them will be felt and exhibited towards each one of their fellow-soldiers; when 'not one shall thrust another, for they shall walk everyone in his path;' when every tongue shall speak the language of praise; when perfect love, peace,

and joy, will be the atmosphere in which the redeemed of the Lord live and move. O why should not these standards be lifted up even now? Is not He who sits as a Refiner and Purifier of silver willing now to make His loved ones strong as lions, patient as oxen, tender and holy as men in God's image, and lofty in their swoop as eagles?

## CHAPTER X.

### THE CHERUBIM IDENTICAL WITH THE SERAPHIM.

‘In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.’—*Isa.* vi. 1, 2.

SHORTLY after he commenced his prophetic career Isaiah was permitted to see the vision recorded in the sixth chapter; a vision which was intended to abase, and yet to encourage and sustain him. A deeper sense of his own unworthiness was aroused in him by a sight of the Lord’s glory; this led him to seek and to obtain a fuller baptism of the Spirit, and a more entire consecration of himself to his Master’s service. ‘In the year that king Uzziah died.’ How startling and yet how appropriate the season! The prophet was about to behold the cleansing of the Temple and the purging of those that worship therein. And that king had just died whose heart was lifted up to his destruction, who was so puffed up by prosperity that he dared to offer incense in the temple of the Lord, and was thrust forth in

haste, smitten by an incurable leprosy. Isaiah would naturally inquire in awe and alarm, if kings who intrude into the priestly office receive such prompt and terrible punishment, what right have sinful men to act as prophets for so holy a God? The vision was calculated first to heighten his fears, and then to shew him that the man whose lips were cleansed might and would volunteer for special ministerial work. The prophet seemed to be in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem. He saw there 'the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train'—the moving skirt of His garment—'filled the temple.' It is the spiritual temple made of living stones which will hereafter be glorified by the Lord's presence. Mysterious symbolic beings, termed 'the seraphim,' stood above the throne. These were none other than the cherubim upon the mercy-seat, who no longer seemed mere pieces of dead metal, but animated creatures, full of life, intelligence, and activity. They were evidently two in number, for we read, 'one cried unto another,' or, as the margin translates the Hebrew, 'this cried to this.' They exhibited the greatest reverence in the presence of the Almighty. And as they alternately offered praise to the Triune God, the posts of the door moved at the sound, and the temple was filled with the glory. When Isaiah realized his wretched condition as a man of unclean lips, one of these seraphs flew to him, with a live coal in his hand from

off the incense-altar, which he laid upon the prophet's lips. As soon as Isaiah knew his iniquity was purged, he was able to hear the Lord's voice crying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' and to respond immediately, 'Here am I; send me.' He needed implicit trust, as well as reverence and boldness, for the delivery of his message. It was one which would not be universally received. The majority would hear, and yet not understand; would see, and yet not perceive. Although he was going forth with the glory he had seen, so to speak, burnt into his very heart and soul, he was foretold that many would not believe his report, that to some it would be a savour of death, rendering them harder than before. The remnant, compared in the 13th verse to a tenth, should return. They should return to their God in true contrition and trust; and, after they had been led into captivity, should return to their own land. That 'holy seed' would form the stock of Israel's vitality and the substance of their strength. (v. 13.) Isaiah was taught the same truth by the name he was divinely directed to give one of his sons, mentioned in the 3rd verse of the following chapter. (Compare chap. vii. 3 with chap. viii. 18.) Shear-jashub means, 'The remnant shall return.' Isaiah was never to forget the two cardinal facts which formed the basis of his mission. The first was, that every vision of glory, or holiness, or blessing which he saw applied only to the remnant of

Israel which should escape or emerge from all tribulations, and be brought back to greater safety and peace than had been unfallen Adam's portion in Eden. This remnant, (whether compared to a tenth part, or here, as to a third, as in Ezek. v. 12 and Zech. xiii. 8, 9,) is the type of the Church of Christ, the elect gathered in out of every nation and tribe. It is upon this elect company alone that the glory rests. The second fact which the prophet was to bear in mind was, that however wide his offer of the gospel message, it would only take root in the heart of the holy seed, and would certainly be rejected by all but the remnant, to whom the arm of the Lord would be revealed.

If we keep these facts in view, we shall, I think, be convinced that there is a substantial unity between this vision of the seraphim and the cherubic manifestations in Ezekiel, as well as the living creatures in Revelation.

I. I shall, first, endeavour to give some reasons for believing the two symbols to be identical.

II. And shall then point out the truths the Lord desires to teach His people by this fresh aspect of His glory.

May all frailty and folly be burnt out of the human vehicle through which the message comes !

I. Although this vision is strikingly similar to

the others on which we have previously dwelt, some have regarded it as entirely distinct from them. A close analysis and comparison is necessary in order to satisfy our minds as to their identity, as well as to glean its peculiar instructiveness. We shall thus be convinced of its perfect harmony with the whole system of symbolic teaching. It is very important to observe that this revelation refers to the future, not the present. This is quite clear from John, xii. 40, 41, where a quotation is made by the Evangelist from the 10th verse of this very chapter, and it is added: 'These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.' The prophet discerned Christ's glory, and spake of Him. Now Christ's glory has not been manifested yet. Not till His people are 'with him where he is' will they 'behold his glory.' (John, xvii. 24.) It was in the far-distant future when Isaiah wrote.

Again, should it be argued that it was a heavenly glory which the seer was privileged to behold, the same which rightfully belonged to the Lord Jesus before the beginning, that view cannot be maintained when we notice the purport of the seraphims' cry: 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: *the whole earth is full of his glory.*' It cannot be said that this has come to pass yet. Satan is the prince of this world. This blessing is prayed for in the seventy-second Psalm, which is millennial throughout: (v. 19:) 'Let the whole earth be filled with his glory.' It is

prophesied in Num. xiv. 21 and in Hab. ii. 14, a passage almost identical with Isa. xi. 9: 'For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' Not till the Royal Bridegroom returns to reign will 'the glory of the Lord be revealed,' and *then* 'all flesh shall see it together.' (Isa. xl. 5.) Even the saints have received but a very small part of their brightness. They 'rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' (Rom. v. 2.) Not till Israel hears the words, 'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,' (Isa. lx. i.) will this blessing be realized. Not till 'the Lord shall be king over all the earth,' (Zech. xiv. 9,) will all creation fully glorify Him. Then shall the earth itself be redeemed from the curse, and, renewed and beautified, will be a fit habitation for the saints. Then will Ps. xxix. 9 be accomplished. (See margin, which is the true translation.) 'In his temple every whit of it uttereth his glory.' There is no doubt, therefore, that Isaiah was borne on into the future, just as St. John was caught up and onward into 'the day of the Lord,' and that he beheld the Church glowing with resurrection glory.

And now let us examine the striking parallels which exist between the seraphim here and the cherubic symbols in Ezekiel and Revelation.

1. All three represent to us a throne, with One seated thereon, who unites Divine majesty and holiness.

ness with human sympathy. Here it is 'the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up,' and yet full of tender compassion for Israel. In Ezekiel, He who sits upon the throne has 'the likeness as the appearance of a man,' but his glory is expressly said to be 'the glory of the Lord.' And when we observe the swift and fiery nature of the animated wheels of His chariot, who is called in the tenth chapter (v. 20) 'the God of Israel,' we feel sure that it is the Son of man in His Father's glory—even the same whom Daniel saw 'like the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven,' and who received 'dominion and glory' from 'the Ancient of days,' of whom we read: 'his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.' (Dan. vii. 9-14.) In Ezekiel also the throne is high: it is 'in the firmament that was above the heads of the cherubim.' (x. 1.) In Rev. iv. 2, the first object that St. John perceived was 'a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.' And the four living creatures appeared 'in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne.' Those that share the throne are the redeemed. They are made kings unto God. We cannot doubt, therefore, that the seraphs who are so near the throne exhibit to us the ransomed in a new character, and reveal to us a new phase of their dominion. Where God's throne is, Ezek. xlivi. 7 clearly sets forth: 'The place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children

of Israel for ever.' Royalty and the redeemed are thus by many cords inseparably united.

2. We have already noticed that this is a revelation of the Lord's glory. And this in a twofold sense. Not only are these symbolic creatures associated with the glory, but they speak of it: (*v. 3:*) 'The whole earth is full of his glory.' And on the very surface it is evident that the visions in Ezekiel and Revelation exhibit the same glory. The living creatures also speak on the same topic. They 'give glory to him that sat on the throne.' (*Rev. iv. 9.*) If, then, our previous arguments prove that in both these cases the glory is that which Christ bestows upon His Church, the seraphim must speak the same language, and testify to the same truth. No other thought is brought before us when we read, in the 4th verse of this chapter, 'the house was filled with smoke.' This figure is always a type of the Lord's glory. Abraham beheld a smoking furnace when the covenant was first made with him by God. (*Gen. xv. 17.*) At the giving of the law Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke hereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace.' (*Exod. xix. 18.*) Its appearance would be very similar to the 'pillar of the cloud,' in which the Lord went before the children of Israel throughout their journeys, (*Exod. xiii. 21.*) and which permanently covered the tabernacle with glory.

On this type M' Ewen well observes: 'What though we should say this pillar of cloud and fire is an emblem of that glorious Person in whom the brightness of divinity is joined with the darkness of humanity? For as there were not two pillars, the one of cloud and the other of fire, but one pillar both of cloud and fire; so there are not two persons of Immanuel, the one God and the other man, but one Person who is both God and man.' And again: 'John, the beloved apostle, and great New Testament prophet, who saw the visions of God, and who talks in many places in the Old Testament dialect, speaks of a glorious Angel arising out of the east, who certainly was Christ Himself: he was clothed with a cloud, and his feet were as pillars of fire—a description which might very probably allude to this same cloud and fire.\*

Indeed, the close analogy intended to exist between both these types is clearly proved from Isa. iv. 5: 'The Lord will create upon every dwelling-place in Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and a smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence, or a covering.' Every household of believers shall have the glory resting upon them, and not merely the gatherings of true worshippers. All the Bridegroom-Redeemer's glory rests upon

\* M'Ewen on the Types, pp. 145, 146.

is bride, for He saith of her: 'Who is this (fem.) at cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense?' (Song, iii. 6.) And there is another allusion to the same appearance in Ezek. x. 4: 'Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.' One more passage will shew what a permanent type this is, reaching on into the visions of the New Testament, and in close proximity to one of the last appearances of the cherubic symbol in Holy Writ. Just after one of the four living creatures had given 'unto the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God,' it is added: 'And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power.' (Rev. xv. 7, 8.)

3. Each of the seraphim had six wings. This is precisely the number of the wings of the four living creatures seen by St. John. (Rev. iv. 8.) And though Ezekiel only specifies four wings, yet these were arranged exactly in the same way as the wings of the seraphim. 'Their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.' (Ezek. i. 11.)

4. Their cry in a remarkable way identifies the seraphs with the cherubic emblems in the Revelation. They unite in magnifying the Triune God—Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit, as they say, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts ;' or, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.' In this they entirely agree, in their deep sense of the holiness of God ; and they realize how unworthy sinful men are to approach Him.

5. The next identification is a link with the vision in Ezekiel. Isaiah saw one of the seraphim flying unto him, 'having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.' The prophet of Chebar tells us, that He who sat upon the throne 'spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.' (Ezek. x. 2.) And we further read in the 7th verse: 'And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between the cherubim, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen.' The very word Seraphim means 'Burning ones ;' and fitly are they associated with glowing embers. Can we then doubt that they exhibit another phase of the same symbol as the cherubim, whose appearance was specially described as 'like burning coals of fire ?' (Ezek. i. 13.) There can be little doubt that the altar from which the seraph took the coal was the incense-altar. And if so, we find another parallel in Rev. viii. 3,

where the Angel, who is the Lord Jesus, took the golden censer, on which He had presented the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne, and 'filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth.'

This doubtless typifies the answers to such prayers of the Lord's people as are recorded in Rev. vi. 10, descending in judgment. So in all these three portions of Scripture we find the saints united with their Head in executing judgments on the ungodly and impenitent.

II. We now come to the fresh aspects of truth presented to us by this vision. And as we examine them, we shall discover additional proof that in this chapter we have another link in the same system of Typology which has so long occupied us, and that the same beings are shadowed forth whom we have recognized in similar symbols.

1. The first truth the Lord desires to teach the many sons whom He purposes to bring unto glory is the exceeding sinfulness of sin. The effect of the vision upon Isaiah was to make him cry, 'Woe is me ! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.' In the cherubic visions the predominant idea seems to be God's glory in its brightness and majesty. In the seraphic emblem we see the

same glory in its intense holiness, burning up the dross of sin and self-will. The same holiness was indeed taught by the flaming sword from which Cain fled, and by the withdrawal of the glory of the Lord's presence from the gaze of priests and people within the holiest of all. Moses was warned that the neighbourhood of the burning bush was holy ground, and none but the high priest dare venture into the inner sanctuary. We have noticed that in Ezekiel's vision the holiness of God's character and the justice of His judgments demanded that vengeance should be poured on the sinners in Jerusalem who wilfully despised His name; but it seems as if in the representation of the seraphs this idea had been singled out for peculiar observation. In the first chapter of Ezekiel the word 'brightness' often recurs—'brightness round about.' And the same thought occurs in the tenth chapter. Although the prophet noticed 'the appearance of fire,' what impressed him most was that 'the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory.' But in Isaiah, the very attitude of the seraphim shows their reverence, and their unworthiness in themselves to look upon God. 'Each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.' Neither our inner life nor our walk can be exposed to the gaze of a heart-searching God, unless we are purified. And even the saints in resurrection-glory 'cast their crowns before the

throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power.' (Rev. iv. 10, 11.) Then observe that the special attribute of God on which they dwell is His holiness. And as they cry out of the glory, the prophet feels that such holiness is the very gift he lacks. It is proclaimed that God is a holy God, and that He hates sin and half-heartedness with a perfect hatred. If we do not love Him with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, there is within us a secret inclining to that idolatry for which the Lord cast off the children of Israel.

2. But the Lord never intends to dishearten His helpless creatures by representing Himself as inaccessible, and His holiness as out of our reach. And so this vision of the seraphim exhibits to us that the very holiness which God demands is a boon which He Himself confers on every believing sinner. Although Christ is seen here 'high and lifted up,' yet 'his train fills the temple.' So while the Lord Jesus reigns in heaven, far above all principality and power, He governs the earth and fills it with His glory. 'All things are put under his feet,' and yet He is 'Head over all to the church, which is his body.' (Eph. i. 22, 23.) We are His train of worshippers, expressed by 'the skirts of Aaron's garments.' And the prospect of pardon and purity seems to be indicated in the 4th verse: 'And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that

cried, and the house was filled with smoke.' On this Mr. S. R. Bosanquet finely observes :—'The door of entrance to salvation is about to be thrown open, and the hinges and posts upon which it hangs groan and shake: the priests who kept the door and shut it up, and keep the key and take it away, are deposed and shaken out of their place; for the Shekinah is there. He has broken up and gone through the door. The house is filled with the smoke of His Incarnate Presence.'\* So when Jesus had cried, 'It is finished,' and 'when he had by himself purged our sins,' 'behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened.' The way into the holiest of all was made manifest: the spiritual temple was laid open, and earth was despoiled of its victims. Jesus shewed that He had the keys of earth, as well as of death and of hell. And not only is Jesus the door of salvation; He is also the door of holiness. He cries: 'I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall go in and out, and find pasture.' He did not intend that His worshippers should always be kept afar off, but that as soon as they longed for inward purity it should be granted them. Notice the effect of this vision upon Isaiah. With the light of that glory

\* *Successive Visions of the Cherubim.* By S. R. Bosanquet, M.A. P. 75.

streaming in upon his soul, he saw himself to be unclean and undone, vile and helpless. Yet as soon as he perceived this, the holiness for which he silently yearned was imparted. One of the seraphim flew to him, 'having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar.' 'And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.' The cherubim, by their very position on the mercy-seat, or propitiatory covering, proclaim that sin is purged away from all those who are one with Christ. And the seraphim teach the same truth. The incense-altar was sprinkled with blood every year on the great Day of Atonement. 'Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement: . . . it is most holy unto the Lord.' Thus the seraphs shew that no prayer is acceptable that does not spring from the atonement of our Blessed Lord. Only blood-sprinkled prayers prevail. These have a sweet savour, because they are prompted by the Spirit of Jesus, and made effectual by His intercession. These incense-embers are fragrant with the Spirit of adoption; they draw forth the prayer, 'Here am I; send me.' And as it was the high priest's duty of old to burn incense upon this altar, so is it the work of the Lord Jesus to kindle prayer. He only can make it fervent, and cause it to glow with His own love, by the power of

the Holy Ghost. There is a passage in the fourth chapter of Isaiah which strikingly illustrates the truth taught by the seraphim: 'And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.' Here we have three thoughts: holiness, life, and the spirit of burning. Those that are 'written among the living' bring before us the cherubim of Ezekiel and Revelation. And the holiness which is produced by purging away sin through the instrumentality of the spirit of burning, furnishes the best possible commentary on the vision which now occupies our thoughts. The seraphs are the burning ones; and they proclaim that sin can be burnt up as fast as it rises by the sprinkling of the precious blood of Christ. The *live* coal laid upon the mouth purifies the heart and cleanses the lips. When we feel this live coal upon our lips, life is imparted to our petitions. Our prayers ascend as on the wings of a mighty eagle to the throne, and are accepted and answered by the grace of our Covenant-God. When our prayers are living prayers, and our faith is strong and child-like, then our whole being rises upward to God like the pure flame of the burnt-offering. Atonement is

taught by all the visions, whether they apply to purging the guilt or burning up the power of sin. And in both cases it is a present blessing. 'Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.'

But it is possible that some may still wonder how the ministration rendered to Isaiah in this vision by these typical beings is reconcileable with the view that they symbolize the redeemed. Here we must recollect in the first place, that if this be admittedly a vision, all difficulty vanishes. The red horses which Zechariah saw were not real horses; and the horses he saw (as recorded in his sixth chapter) in the first chariot probably typified the Babylonian Empire, which had then ceased to exist. It is not more difficult to conceive that Isaiah saw the redeemed in a state of activity as well as glory which they had not then attained, than to suppose that Zechariah discerned events some of which had passed from the scene of worldly affairs. And next we must remember that angels are represented in Scripture as watching over the heirs of glory in temporal rather than spiritual matters. But the Church preaches to angels. (See Eph. iii. 10.) 'To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.'

How fruitful is this subject in stimulative and establishing lessons suited to ourselves!

1. The more we see of God's glory, the more we shall hate sin. It was this sight that made the prophet cry, 'Woe is me, for I am undone!' When the Lord Jesus manifested His glory in the wonderful draught of fishes, Peter was driven to cry, 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!' He could not help contrasting Christ's goodness with his own ungratefulness and hardness of heart. It is the light that reveals the darkness, and the holiness that discloses the sin.

2. Yet even when we see that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, when we discern the efficacy of the cleansing blood, we are able to walk in the light of His countenance. So far from being driven to despair, we are encouraged to draw near. God's own glory lights upon us. We know what it is to have been 'once washed,' and to be 'clean every whit.' And though we have been purged by the spirit of burning, no scars are visible. The fire has burnt up all the dross and consumed none of the gold.

3. But if we will work for the Master who has plucked us as brands from the burning, we need an entire surrender to His service. Body, soul, and spirit, must be His. Talents, powers, and affections must be laid on His altar. Isaiah was a believer before he saw this vision, but he needed a more complete consecration to his office before he could be sent forth to proclaim the Coming Emmanuel to

a rebellious and stiff-necked people. Many yield half, but not the whole ; and so the Lord does not shew them His glory, or make them the instruments of turning many to righteousness. ‘ Bring all the tithes into His storehouse,’—write on all you have and are, ‘ Holiness to the Lord,’—and He will open the windows of heaven, and pour you out an abundant blessing. Only lie low enough, and there will be no need for fear whether the Lord will use you for His glory. Suffer your God to empty you of self, and He will then fill you with His Spirit.

4. Such a consecration as this imparts the willingness and the power to labour for Christ. The nearer we approach the glory the more we shall care for the souls of others, and the greater will be our success. Do you feel yourself undone, and ready to despair ? Then your labour will be more effectual than ever it was before. You will hang entirely on the strength, and go forward on the mission of the Mighty God. When Isaiah heard the words, ‘ Thy sin is purged,’ he looked no longer at his own unworthiness or uncleanness. All he could distinguish was the Master’s call, ‘ Whom shall I send, and who will go for us ? ’ And he doubted and delayed no longer ; he was a blood-sprinkled man ; he was strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man. And therefore he boldly cried, ‘ Here am I ; send me.’ Precisely in the same manner was Peter’s alarm and astonishment subdued.

The Lord did not deny that he was a ~~sinf-~~ man, yet not only did He assure him of his own acceptance, but also pointed out that the glorious miracle he had just witnessed would be the starting point for a life of labour in the service of the Saviour. ‘Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. England is full of fields white already to the harvest. There are many yearning for peace who have no man to guide them. It has been truly said by a devoted labourer for his Master, ‘There are more persons wanting to be saved than there are men in the churches able to save them,’ or to point out to them the way of salvation. Well may Mr. Moody say, with reference to the masses beyond the means of grace: ‘It seems to me that if there be upon God’s earth one blacker sight than these thousands of Christless and graceless souls, it is these thousands of dead and slumbering Christians living in their very midst, rubbing shoulders with them every day upon the street, and never as much as lifting up a little finger to warn them of death, and eternity, and judgment to come.’ And truly does he add: ‘The excuses which Satan puts into the sinner’s heart for rejecting Christ are nothing to those with which he tempts the Christian to abstain from Christian work. Let us rise and examine ourselves in the sight of God, and see what is to hinder us from entering the vineyard of His Son.’\*

\* *Christian*, Jan. 21, 1875.

5. At the same time, we must be prepared to meet with indifference and opposition. This was the Master's lot, and we cannot escape it. Only a few will 'see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.' The gospel is being preached for a witness :—only to God's elect will it be the savour of life unto life. The very truth which saves the remnant, hardens the impenitent. The same pillar which gave light by night to the Israelites was a cloud and darkness to the Egyptians. (Exod. xiv. 19, 20.) Out of this very pillar of fire and of the cloud the Lord looked, and troubled the host of Pharaoh. Alas ! that this message should bring darkness, and uncertainty, and trouble to some, because they have closed their eyes and ears against it. May it be to us who search this Scripture a word of life and of power, subduing sin and filling up defect, so that we may work the more earnestly while it is day !

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE LIVING ONES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

‘And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth.’—*Rev. v. 8-10.*

THROUGHOUT the whole of the inspired volume we have traced the same series of significant symbols, which we cannot doubt to be the very core and essence of all Scripture Typology, and to be more deeply fraught with instructive truth than any type which is only occasionally introduced in the pages of Holy Writ. We found them in Genesis, and we now take leave of them in Revelation. It is only natural to expect that in the latest book of the Bible this symbol should be more completely developed than in any of the preceding manifestations ; and in

this we are not disappointed. It seems as if every truth gets nearer and clearer when we have followed it from the beginning to the close of God's Book. Eminently is this the case with the visions of the cherubim. At each step they approach nearer. Near the gate of Eden we can discern their form, but they seem as impalpable as the curling flame which leaps forth from between them. And even when in Exodus they are carved out of the most precious material, they are as cold and lifeless as the metal out of which they are made. At length, in Ezekiel, they breathe—they live—they move. Sight is theirs; in fact, they are all eye. Hearing is theirs; with them to listen is to obey. (x. 6, 7, 19.) Marvellous gifts of motion are theirs. They have feet to walk with, and wheels to roll with, and wings to mount upward wherewithal. Their movement is like a flash of lightning. And the pivot on which all turns is the will of the Spirit of life which animates them. And yet, though they are so full of intelligence and activity, we hear not what they say. There is indeed a mighty and instructive sound sent forth by the rushing of their wings. It is 'like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host; ' and it is responded to by 'a voice from the firmament that was over their heads.' Yet what those mysterious intercommunings import, and what those voices utter, we know not. From a

thousand senses they speak; from ten thousand points they ~~flash~~ forth life; and yet, though they look, and listen, and act, and run, and mount, they bring no messages to us. Their speech is not articulate. The parallel vision of the seraphim must be viewed as later in revelation; because, though earlier in point of time, its identity with the cherubic symbol is not discerned till Ezekiel has been studied, and is not apprehended by some till they have heard a voice that responds, and seen a light that reflects a backward gleam from the living creatures in the midst of the throne whereon the Lamb sitteth. The seraphs did indeed utter notes of praise as they cried, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory:' but who they are they reveal not. In this Book of Revelation the same symbols reappear, and they seem nearer to us than ever they did before. Not only do they speak, but they tell us who they are; they sing the song not of creation only, but also of redemption. They do not merely, like the seraphs, cry, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come;' (Rev. iv. 8;) but they also sing the new song, 'saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.' So

the whole mystery is explained from their own lips. No further doubt can rest upon the mind of the student of Scripture. Every fragment of the veil which hides the glory is torn away. We have been hitherto peering in through the partially opened door. Now we are permitted to enter the very threshold of the holy of holies. The topstone is laid upon the temple. It is thus that we know even with greater certainty than before who these living symbols are. We, whose sins have been washed in Christ's own blood, discern in that crystal sea ourselves reflected. It is the whole Church of the firstborn to which we are introduced. It seems as if a hand was laid upon our shoulder, and we heard a voice, saying, 'This is your place, and that of all the ransomed. This glory is your glory, for you shall sit with Christ on His throne.' Oh, then, 'Come up hither, brother and sister saints: the Lord will show you, not things that are now, but things which must be hereafter.'

The first thing which has to be cleared up is the correct text of these all-important verses. Great stress has been laid by one or two writers on the fact that 'them' is read instead of 'us' in some Greek copies of *v.* 9; and again in *v.* 10, 'them' for 'us,' and 'they' for 'we.'

What is the exact state of the case?

The Sinaitic Codex is the oldest and most perfect manuscript of the Greek Testament in the world.

Professor Tischendorf, who discovered it on Mount Sinai in 1862, considers that it belongs to the middle of the fourth century—that is, about 300 years from the period when most of the New Testament was written, and only 250 years from the time when the Book of Revelation was penned by St. John. The best scholars consider this book to have been committed to writing A.D. 95 to 97.\* Now the Sinaitic version reads as follows:—

‘And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made them unto our God a kingdom and priesthood: and they shall reign on the earth.’

The Vatican Codex is the next in value. It may date from the middle of the fourth century. But it is very imperfect, and the Book of Revelation is wholly missing in it. However, Cardinal Mai, in his edition of this version, a copy of which is to be found in the British Museum, incorporates the word *ημᾶς* [‘us’] in the 9th verse.

The Alexandrine Codex seems to have been written about the middle of the fifth century. It reads as follows:—

\* Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii. Alford’s *Greek Testament*: Prolegomena to vol. iv.

‘And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made them unto our God a kingdom and priests: and they reign on the earth.’

Almost the only ancient manuscript which concurs with the Alexandrine version in omitting the word ‘us’ in the 9th verse is the *Aethiopic*. Dr. Tregelles, in his latest and most valuable edition of the Revelation in Greek, (printed March, 1872,) deliberately retains the *ημᾶς* [‘us’] in this verse. And he cites eight valuable manuscripts, besides the *Sinaitic*, which retain the pronoun. And in his *Book of Revelation, translated from the Ancient Greek Text*, published in 1859, he substantially follows the *Sinaitic Codex*:—‘And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the roll, and to open the seals thereof: because thou wast slain, and redeemedst us to God by thy blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation; and thou madest them unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign on the earth.’ Dean Alford, though he rejects the *ημᾶς*, admits that the word ‘has considerable authority.’ Indeed, the only reason why he omits it appears to be because it does not fit in with his system of interpretation. The Rev. E. B. Elliott, in his great work,

*Horæ Apocalypticæ*, reads according to our translation. Now the opinion of a good Greek scholar, who has been studying this book for forty years, ought to have great weight.

The Sinaitic version can be appreciated in its rendering of these two verses by those who have followed me thus far. In the 9th verse the four living creatures and four-and-twenty elders declare their identity with the great company of the ransomed by the words, 'Thou hast redeemed us.' In the 10th verse they speak as representatives of others, in the name of a mighty multitude: 'Thou hast made them unto our God a kingdom and priesthood: and they shall reign on the earth.' Now this is exactly what we should expect. Once the pronoun 'us' is used, to shew who they are that utter it. Next, 'us' is changed for 'them,' in order to shew that the speakers are not separate existences, but symbols of others. There is also some authority for the word *ἡμᾶς* ['us'] in the 10th verse, and considerable ancient testimony for *βασιλεύσομεν*, ['we shall reign'].

I. We shall find that this Book of Revelation gives us additional and valuable proofs of the meaning of the type.

II. We will notice their appearance.

III. We will observe their occupation and listen to their language.

I. A natural inquiry that strikes us at the outset of this part of our subject is this. As the elders are evidently united with the living creatures in symbolizing the redeemed, what points in the character of the Lord's people, or what special privileges of theirs, are severally set forth to us in this twofold type? I think that in the twenty-four elders we see the Church both of the Old and New Testament in its royal and priestly character. The Church of the Old Testament is ranged under the twelve tribes of Israel, who are again represented by their twelve heads, the twelve patriarchs. And the Church of the New Testament is represented by the twelve apostles. The four-and-twenty must be kings, for they are seated on thrones, (*θρόνοις*, Rev. iv. 4), and they have on their heads crowns of gold. This is exactly what the Lord Jesus promised the twelve apostles. (See Matt. xix. 28.) 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' And the 'white raiment' with which the elders are clothed proclaims that they are priests. 'The fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' It is Christ's high-priestly dress, and He gives such a dress to His ransomed ones, when He has washed them from their sins in His own blood. Thus they are enabled to offer unto God spiritual sacrifices, with which He

is well pleased. (Heb. xiii. 15, 16.) And to this correspond their words when they cry, 'Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.' The Lord's people even here are enabled to put their feet upon the necks of their tyrant lusts. Even now they can sometimes realize what St. Paul meant when he cried, 'Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.' (2 Cor. ii. 14.) And their victory is so sure that they can exclaim, 'Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' (Rom. viii. 37.) This symbol is the fitting complement and clue to the seven promises 'to him that overcometh,' in the two preceding chapters of the Book of Revelation. We thus see that the saints of God have actually overcome, and are seated with Christ upon His throne, according to His faithful and unchangeable promise in Rev. iii. 21.

The second part of the type which is brought before us, when the living ones unite with the four-and-twenty elders in the ascription of praise to Him who redeemed them, is evidently that which is suggested by their name. They exhibit the life which Christ imparts to them. The curse pronounced on Adam and Eve was death: 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' (Gen. ii. 17.) This curse had to be carried out. The tree of life had to be fenced off for a season.

But its bitterness no believing sinner, even in Old Testament times, was compelled to bear. For 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.' (Gal. iii. 13.) The blessing that is made over to us through Jesus Christ is Life. 'The Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.' (Ps. cxxxiii. 3.) This is His first and choicest gift. And therefore it must occupy a prominent position in the types. Wisdom spake long since in the name of the Word of God, 'Whoso findeth me findeth life.' (Prov. viii. 35.) The whole Bible reveals Christ as the Life. 'For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.' (John, v. 26.) And this life is for all who listen and obey. 'They that hear the voice of the Son of God shall live.' 'The resurrection of life' is theirs. All the signs which Jesus did are 'written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name.' (John, xx. 31.) And just as this truth is brought before us in all the Bible, so is great stress laid upon it in this latest Revelation of God's Son. In the first chapter, and 18th verse, Christ announces Himself as 'the Living One:' 'I am he that liveth.' 'Behold, I am alive for evermore.' Among His promises to him that overcometh in the church at Smyrna are 'to eat of the tree of life,' and 'a crown of life.' (Rev. ii. 7, 10.) In the eleventh

chapter and 11th verse we read that 'the spirit of life from God entered into' the two witnesses, 'and they stood upon their feet.' A wondrous book which is opened at the judgment (in the twentieth chapter) is called the Book of Life. In xxi. 6 we find the promise: 'I will give unto him that is ~~thirst~~ thirst of the fountain of the water of life fre~~ely~~.' Then five times in the last chapter of God's Word do we meet with this encouraging word—life. Twice we have pictured 'the water of life,' and twice we seem to see 'the tree of life' growing in incorruptible beauty upon its banks. And once we read of 'the book of life,' unless, with the two oldest versions, we read here, 'the tree of life.' Seven times in the first chapter of the Bible does the word life occur in the Hebrew. And one of the first truths with reference to the creation of man, and God's provision for him, was this:—'The Lord God made to grow,—the tree of life also in the midst of the garden.' Then we see the same tree fenced off for a season, yet only kept treasured up for an appointed time. Solomon has a glimpse from afar of Wisdom as 'a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.' (Prov. iii. 18.) At last we hear, after the lapse of many centuries, of 'having a right to the tree of life.' The fruit has during this long period been preserved for man. And how is it to be obtained? According to the best reading, we shall find the answer thus in Rev. xxii. 14: 'Blessed are they that wash their

robes, that they may have right to the tree of life.' How exactly does this accord with the new song sung by those who have been redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb ! The living ones are therefore Christ's sheep, for whom 'He gave His life, (John, x. 11,) and who have the promise: 'I give unto them eternal life.' (John, x. 28.) 'The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath' already 'made them free from the law of sin and death.' The undying principle is within. But their best is to come. 'Their life is hid with Christ in God; and when he shall appear, they shall also appear with him in glory.' (Col. iii. 3, 4.) Then will the full volume of life roll on. Then will the body be reanimated, the soul purified, and the spirit refined. Then will the saint be endowed with large capacities and buoyant energies, be furnished with ripe knowledge, and bask in an atmosphere of radiant joy. 'There will be no more curse.' Sin and death will have entirely lost their grasp. He who is pre-eminently the Living One had the keys of Hades and death; and He has set the captives free, and interposed a gulf so impassable, that the soaring recipients of life can never be tarnished or detained any more. Sin is burnt up. Death is conquered. Mortality is swallowed up in life.

Much stress cannot be laid on the circumstance that angels are expressly distinguished from the living ones in Rev. v. 11: 'And I beheld, and I

heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living ones, and the elders;’ because, though the elders are distinguished from the living ones, they are united in the type, and they sing the same song. In chapter xiv. 1-5 other harpers are introduced, who are ‘before the throne, and before the four living ones, and the elders;’ and yet they too sing the new song, which ‘no man could learn but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.’ We see here, therefore, either different companies of the ransomed, or else we have the same great body of the redeemed represented to us under different aspects.

But it is very important to notice where the angels were:—‘round about the throne.’ The living ones were ‘in the midst of the throne,’ as well as ‘round about the throne.’ (Rev. iv. 6.) And the elders were seated on thrones of their own. The redeemed have therefore a place where angels are never represented. The prophecy in iii. 21 is fulfilled in their case: all unworthy as they are, they sit down with Christ on His throne.

As we proceed, we shall meet with fresh and incontestable proof of their identity.

II. Let us now examine their appearance. Many of these points we have noticed before. What specially distinguishes the type in this Book of Revelation?

1. The number and position of their eyes was a prominent feature. They were 'full of eyes before and behind.' And 'they were full of eyes within.' (vv. 6, 8.) From Ezekiel we had gathered that their whole body was full of eyes, and we noticed that the eye was specially a symbol of knowledge. How marvellous will be the knowledge possessed by the saints hereafter! They are full of eyes *before*. Many of the secrets of futurity are spread open to the gaze. 'The manifold wisdom of God' is made so clear to the Church that its members convey what they have seen and learned to angels: they 'make known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places' what God has revealed to them by His Spirit. (Eph. iii. 10.) They look on, and they see God's judgments accomplished, and rejoice with a holy joy. They see the growing glories of Christ's Church, the fuller joys and the fresh duties which God has reserved for them throughout the blissful vistas of an ever-expanding eternity of happiness. They are 'full of eyes behind.' They look back, and they see all the way the Lord led them through this wilderness, all their own follies and victories, and the needsbe for all His fatherly chastisements, which seemed so grievous at the time. With wonder, awe, and thankfulness, they retrace the path now bedewed with tears and chequered by a thousand alarms; and they see how lovingly they were watched over, and how securely they were

kept. And they note the unerring wisdom which ordered every circumstance as they grasp the full meaning of the promise: 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.' The 'hereafter' has arrived. They see all, and adore. They are likewise 'full of eyes within.' Time was when they could not look long in that direction, when to look within only caused pain and loathing. Brief looks within they found needful at times, that they might discern the spots, and at once get them washed away in the precious blood. But it was far pleasanter to gaze on the countenance of Him who is Altogether Lovely. How changed are they now that sin is quite purged away by 'the spirit of burning!' They dwell in the light, and they walk in the light. That light searches them through and through; and thus, wholly purified, they ~~can~~ look within. There is nought in their own character to alarm. In the fullest sense, they are 'living epistles of Christ.' He has stamped upon them His own nature. They have the seal of the living God. Their hearts beat in perfect unison with His own. Their spirits and their whole being move in swiftest obedience to His will. The prophecy in 1 Cor. xiii. 12, is now fulfilled. They no longer 'see darkly, ~~as~~ in a riddle;' (margin;) but 'face to face.' They 'know' as they have long since 'been known' by Christ and the angels.

The Rev. C. Davison, in some valuable unpub-

lished lectures on this subject, counts up twelve different kinds of eyes which characterize the Church of Christ. 'The true signification of eyes is this, that while the Church is living spiritually according to the Word, they shall find themselves endued and blessed with very many gifts and graces of the Spirit, which shall be to the Lord's glory. For instance,—Zech. ii. 8 : 'He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.' How very sensible is the eye of the least touch ! hence tenderness of mind and conscience, spiritual sensitiveness, or great sensitiveness of all that passes within or without, may be signified. 1 Cor. xii. 26 : 'And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.' They will be deeply concerned in the circumstances of others, and they will be more and more so if growing in grace. Ps. xxxv. 21 : 'Our eye hath seen it.' The eye notices and observes : spiritual persons will notice and observe all things, lest they sin, lest God be dishonoured, lest the enemy prevail ; and, like Ps. cvii. 43, that God's loving-kindness may be perceived, that wisdom may be gained, that praise may be given for the various ways in which God leads His people, and rules over all things. Mark, xiii. 37 : The Church must ever be on the watch. A third kind of eye might be perceived by Ezek. xx. 24 : 'Their eyes were after their fathers' idols.' Here it means the desires. So Christ's people, when

thriving, are eagerly and earnestly desiring the highest, and greatest, and best things. Philip. i. 23. A fourth eye is the eye of judgment. Prov. iii. 7: 'Be not wise in thine own eyes.' And Prov. xxvi. 5, and xii. 15. Surely Christians ought to have an eye of discernment to perceive the difference between right and wrong! 1 John, ii. 20. 1 Cor. ii. 15: 'He that is spiritual discerneth all things.' In the Church of Christ there are some that are like babes; they are carnal: but there are others who are advanced in spiritual discernment. A fifth kind of eye we may perceive in Lam. v. 17: 'For these things our eyes are dim.' This is an eye of compassion, of sympathy, of bowels of mercies for others. 'Be pitiful:' 1 Pet. iii. 8. A sixth is in Job, xvi. 20: 'Mine eye poureth out tears unto God.' This is an eye of sorrow. Christ's Church is composed of sorrowing ones: 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Matt. v. 4: 'Blessed are they that mourn.' Rom. ix. 2: 'I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.' Still (2 Cor. vi. 10) 'sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing.' A seventh eye is the eye of knowledge. Isa. vi. 10: 'Lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart.' Num. xv. 24. The Church is thus to be growing. 2 Pet. iii. 18: 'Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Col. i. 10. An eighth is the eye of expectation. Rom. viii. 19. Ps. lxix. 3: 'Mine eyes fail while I wait on my God.' Christians ought to be full of

hope. A ninth is the eye of faith. Isa. xxxiii. 17: 'Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.' So now, Heb. xii. 1, 2: 'Looking unto Jesus.' A tenth is the eye of understanding. Ps. cxix. 18: 'Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.' So Eph. i. 10. The eleventh is the eye of the mind. Prov. xxii. 9: 'He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed.' This is a bountiful, liberal mind. They that are living spiritually according to the Word have a disposition to show kindness. 2 Cor. viii. 12: 'A willing mind.' Lastly, there is an eye of care. 2 Chron. vii. 15: 'Mine eyes shall be open . . . unto the prayer that is made in this place.' This is what the Church of Christ is remarkable for; when prospering, its members are very wary and careful. Col. ii. 8: They 'beware.' These eyes, and perhaps many more, the Church requires, and God is glorified in the use of them. The Church then is full of eyes: it is sensitive, quick, thoughtful, spiritually-minded, discerning, compassionate, sorrowing, filled with knowledge, expectation, faith, understanding, liberality, and watchfulness.'

The likeness of the four living creatures we have already commented upon. We have seen that each of the four living creatures in Ezekiel had the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle, in order to shew that the Church of Christ as a whole, and every great

division of it, must possess sympathy, courage, self-sacrifice, and spirituality. Here, in Revelation, these characteristics are isolated and individualized, in order to teach us that at one period the Church is distinguished by courage, then by endurance, thirdly by sympathetic brotherhood, and lastly by heavenliness.

Nor are the six wings new to us. Although only four were noticed by Ezekiel, the number is identical with those described by Isaiah in the seraphic vision.

III. We now come to their occupation and language. On these points we are not left in the dark. We are permitted to view their acts, or to listen to their words, under seven different aspects.

1. They are continually praising God. 'They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.' (iv. 8.) They 'give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.' Prayer is the cry of the Church militant; but praise is the language of heaven. Now you cry out of the depths; hereafter you shall soar above the sapphire sky. Now you are sometimes 'in heaviness through manifold temptations'; hereafter every burden will be removed. There will then be no more danger, no more possibility of falling. And so as the soul basks in un-

clouded sunshine, the whole being will burst forth in praise and adoration. They praise God in His holiness. If He had not been infinitely holy, heaven would not have been happy. They praise Him in the firmament of His power. If He had not been Almighty, He could not have saved souls, and set a multitude of captives free.

2. But the children of men could never praise God for His holiness and might were it not for the redemption wrought out by His well-beloved Son. And so the principal worship of the living ones is directed to the Lord Jesus. They 'fall down before the Lamb.' (v. 8.) And when the angels cry 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,' and when every creature ascribes 'blessing, and honour, and glory' unto the Lamb, they say, 'Amen.' (vv. 11-14.) There is no one in heaven who does not give to Christ the same glory as to the Father. He will come again 'in his own glory, and in his Father's glory.' Indeed He is the Person of the Blessed Trinity singled out for special honour. 'All the glory of his Father's house hangs upon him.' (Isa. xxii. 24.) It is He who brings many sons unto glory, and He deserves all the praise. His glory is great in God's salvation. (Ps. xxi. 5.) The glory of creation is the Father's, but the glory of salvation is the Son's. On earth many of His professed followers rob Him of His glory. They give part to His mother and to the saints. In heaven no one will dare to take

away any part of the glory due unto His Name. The song before the throne is: 'Thou hast finished the work, and Thou deservest all the praise.' 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' The perfected saints give all the glory of their salvation to Christ. Will not you?

3. It seems now, as if many prayers were left unanswered. Years have passed since you began asking for special mercies for yourselves, or those dear to you, and yet the answer comes not. Many of these prayers God means to answer in His own appointed time. The four living ones 'had every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours.' These odours are explained to be 'the prayers of saints.' Of what saints? Doubtless, of the great company of saints throughout the world. We here see the Church of Christ pleading the yet unanswered petitions of its members before the throne. The word 'vials' should be translated 'bowls.' They are flat vessels, heaped up with a multitude of prayers. And just as the requests at many recent prayer-meetings have been too numerous to read, so will these requests be infinite in number. Yet they will be precious as burnt incense in the eyes of our King. It was His Spirit who prompted them. It was Jesus who kindled the fire. It was the merits of the Redeemer which made them sweet and fragrant. And now that the saints bring them nearer the

throne, who will present them? The clue to this is given us in chap. viii. 3: 'And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.' Now this Angel can be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. No one else has a right to present our prayers but Himself. He is the 'minister of the true tabernacle.' He is the 'high priest, who appears in God's presence for us.' It is He who saith, 'Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' (John, xiv. 13.) And mark, these are the prayers '*of all saints.*' What a fresh link is thus given us of the identity of the living ones! We see the prayers of the saints in their hands and in the hands of the elders in the fifth chapter; and in the eighth chapter we see Christ taking all of them, and pleading the perfume of His finished work as He presents them before the Father. Do not, therefore, be disheartened, ye saints of the Lord. All your prayers are heard and registered. Not one has been forgotten. Hereafter they shall be united with praise. The bowl and the harp will occupy the hands of God's people. So complete will be their trust that they will begin a full chorus of praise before the throne. Few of them will say a word about their requests. Many were answered before. Regarding the rest they

have perfect confidence. They know that Jesus is coming to fulfil them. The remainder of your prayers, brethren, will soon reach the throne. They will enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. The perfume will ascend up before God. Communion will take the place of prayer, and wrestling be exchanged for trustful confidence.

4. These living ones feel no fatigue. They 'rest not day and night' in their service of praise. They are never weary. Possessed of glorified bodies, they no longer groan, as we do, in this tabernacle, being burdened. Now this is precisely the characteristic of the saints made white in the blood of the Lamb, whom St. John saw in vii. 15: 'They are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.' Indeed, it is twice said of the new Jerusalem, (xxi. 25 and xxii. 5,) 'there shall be no night there.' And where there is no night there is no sleep, and no lassitude. The saints of God mount up on the untiring pinions of the eagle. Wherever their spirit disposes them to go, they move with the greatest ease and swiftness. (Ezek. i. 20.) Now, we are constantly dragged down by the weakness of the body. There is little that we can enterprise, and less that we can accomplish. We are sometimes so overpowered by fatigue that we cannot pray. We are still under the bondage of corruption. We wait for the redemption of the body. And we lay hold with rejoicing anticipation of the prophecy regarding

the renewed body: 'It is sown in weakness: it is raised in power.' (1 Cor. xv. 43.)

5. They 'sing the new song.' Not merely are they engaged in praise, but in praise for a special mercy. The old song was the song of creation, when God 'laid the foundations of the earth.' Then 'the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.' (Job, xxxviii. 4, 7.) The new song is the song of redemption. David sang this when the Lord brought him up out of the horrible pit. Then was a new song put in his mouth. (Ps. xl. 2, 3.) Now we are expressly told of the new song when sung by heavenly harpers in Rev. xiv. 1-3, 'No man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.' It is the sole prerogative of the redeemed. And as the living ones, according to all the versions, sing the new song in chap. v. 9, they must have been redeemed from the earth. They are not denizens of the planets, nor old inhabitants of heaven, but they are those who have been taken out of the miry clay of earth, and had their feet set upon the Rock of Ages. No one else '*can learn that song.*' No others dare to take up its language. They give glory to the Lamb, because all the work of their redemption was His. There is no earthly music like the new song. Shall you sing it?

6. They invite attention to the fulfilment of the prophecies. When the Lamb opened the first of the

seals, St. John saith, 'And I heard as it were the voice of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.' And although the words translated 'and see' are not to be found in some old manuscripts, we can hardly doubt that what was uttered by each of the four living ones in order was intended as an invitation to come and witness what was about to be manifested. Each calls in order, first the one like a lion, then the second like a calf, next the third with a face as a man, and last the fourth like a flying eagle. And we cannot doubt that the characteristics of the Church in various periods have some relation to the prophecies to be then fulfilled. Their voice is like the voice of thunder. So was the sound of their wings in Ezekiel, 'like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty.' The voice of the united Church of Christ is a mighty voice. It makes the world tremble. Their voice is the mind of Jesus, for they and He are one. There are many reasons which make it probable that all three words, 'Come and see,' were really uttered by the living ones. They are the words of the Lord Jesus to Andrew, in John, i. 46. In answer to his question and that of his fellow-disciple, 'Where dwellest thou?' He saith unto them, 'Come and see.' The Master bids us likewise to come and see His resting-places, to taste and see for ourselves that He is good. They are the words of Philip to Nathanael: when the sincere but doubting Israelite exclaimed, 'Can there any good

thing come out of Nazareth?'—his friend's only reply was, 'Come and see.' And even if we take the word 'Come,' simply, it is uttered by the Church of Christ in Rev. xxii. 17: 'The Spirit and the bride say, Come.' The whole company of God's people unite with His Spirit in a free invitation to all that are athirst. The latter part of the verse shews to whom this word, 'Come,' is addressed: 'Let him that is athirst come.' The Church of Christ in her glorified state sends forth a double invitation. She invites her fellow-believers to study the prophecies, and to note their fulfilment. And she calls upon every thirsty one to come and drink of the water of life freely. And each trusting one that is added to the number of the saved takes up the glad watchword, 'Let him that heareth say, Come.'

There is another truth which makes the words 'Come and see' eminently suitable in the lips of the cherubim. *Their appearance is always indicative of the revelation of a mystery.* Adam and Eve were in darkness and trouble when they were driven out of Eden. Then a light streamed forth from the Shechinah-glory above the cherubim. It seemed to proclaim, 'Fear not; there is life and gladness in store for you.' When the Israelites were in the wilderness they knew not whither they were going. They longed for a revelation. It was granted. The Lord said: 'Let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.' And He promised to meet with

Moses, and commune with him from between the two cherubim upon the ark. And He said that His presence should go before His people, till they reached Canaan. The remnant of Israel were downcast when in captivity by the river of Chebar. Even Ezekiel could not distinguish the future. Again the cherubic glory appeared, in order to intimate, 'There is light upon your path.' So in this last book of the Bible, when the seals of the great book of redemption are being opened, it is fitting that the living ones should cry, 'Come and see.' Every ransomed one invites a brother. He cries: 'The mystery has been solved for me: joy and peace are mine. Come with me.' It is 'the mystery of God' which is being finished, (Rev. x. 7,) which is 'the mystery of Christ;' and yet the mystery of Christ and the Church. (Eph. iii. 4 and v. 32.) This is the whole mystery of godliness. It is this which we are invited to study. And it is the glorified and perfected Church which beckons us on. Let us too gaze on Christ's victories, as He rides upon the white horse. When He goes forth conquering and to conquer, we, if we are part of 'the armies of heaven,' shall 'follow him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.' (Rev. xix. 14.)

7. They acquiesce in God's judgments, and aid in carrying them out. The two last times when the living ones are mentioned in Scripture are Rev. xv. 7, and xix. 4. When the seven angels came out of

the temple, having the seven plagues, ‘One of the four beasts [or living ones] gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.’ Before Jesus can reign, He must send His angels to ‘gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.’ (Matt. xiii. 41.) The Church of Christ will acquiesce in this banishment of evil, for there is no other guarantee for their own holiness and preservation. If vengeance be God’s ‘strange work,’ it is strange to His people also. But whatever is a necessity of His kingdom, His saints will willingly agree to. The soldiers rejoice in their Commander’s victory. His enemies shall be silent in darkness. The song of Moses was a song of conquest. And it will be sung again, together with the song of the Lamb. If we have gained the victory, we shall know how to use the harps of God. Our overcoming and His are the same.

So, too, when the smoke of Babylon rose up for ever and ever, and when much people in heaven cried, Alleluia, praising the Lord for the truth and righteousness of His judgments, ‘the four-and-twenty elders and four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.’ When that false system is smitten which has beguiled so many, all the saved will rejoice that so many captives are set free from the snare of the fowler. The great whore must be judged before the

bride is wedded. What we see here is the destruction of the great apostasy, rather than a special judgment of individuals. It is therefore that God's holy apostles and prophets shall rejoice, because God will avenge the blood of His slaughtered saints, and He will no more suffer the unwary to be entrapped by the fascinations of Rome's golden cup.

Such are the privileges which God is preparing for His loved ones to enjoy; such the duties He intends them to discharge; and such is the glory of which they shall partake. They are children of the resurrection, and children of the kingdom. They are made kings and priests unto God. They fight on His side, and fight with success. They rule with Christ. Jesus is still their High Priest, but they aid Him in offering spiritual sacrifices. There is no limit to the power of His grace, nor to the glory of His salvation. A little while, saints, and all will have to come to pass. Wait and wrestle a little longer, and you shall overcome: and your voice shall swell the thunders of the chorus: 'Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.'

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE LORD'S DESIRE FOR HIS CHURCH.

'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.'—*Isa. lxii. 1.*

WE have now traced out the various manifestations of the Lord's glory which He has revealed to us in His Word. And we have seen that Christ Jesus always shares His glory with His Church, and that He purposes hereafter to adorn her with a yet richer beauty and holiness than she can receive now. There are few who have searched the Scriptures with us thus far who are not convinced that this glory is symbolized by the visions of the cherubim, the seraphim, and the living ones. But still the trembling believer is prone to imagine that these pictures set forth a brightness and a majesty, a holiness and a victory, which are unattainable now, and he is ready to conclude that the glory of the future has only a slight connexion with the conflict of the present. There are two thoughts which prove how mistaken is such a supposition. In the first place,

the joy set before you is the only principle of sufficient power to enable you to bear the cross. You cannot plod your weary way across this wilderness, and endure the temptations which pierce so sharply, and bear the sorrows which are ready to crush you, unless you have your eyes fixed above. With the trouble so palpable and near, and the heaven so far and unseen, you need a strong sight to enable you to behold the King in His beauty. The power to see and to lay hold on this joy Jesus is ready to give you. For the second thought is the glorious fact revealed in Isa. lxii. 1, that it is the earnest desire and the unresting purpose of the Lord Jesus to fashion His people after the model of the cherub and the seraph. He intends to make them 'burning and shining lights.' He will not rest till the righteousness of his Zion 'go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.'

We know that Zion and Jerusalem are typical of His whole Church, and that whatsoever spiritual blessing He has covenanted to bestow on the Jew, He will also grant to the Gentile. The Israelite's earthly portion will not diminish the spiritual inheritance of the whole body of the faithful. Nor can we have any doubt who is the Speaker in this chapter. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is He who commences the sixty-first chapter, saying, 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me;' for He applied these words to Himself in the syna-

gogue at Nazareth. It is He who declares in the 8th verse of that chapter, 'I the Lord love judgment.' And it can be none other than Emmanuel who cries in the 10th verse, 'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness.' The conflict is over. Christ rejoices. He is covered by His Father with the robe of righteousness to give it to His people. He 'decketh himself with ornaments as a bridegroom.' The period is therefore pointed out when the marriage of the Lamb draws near. How natural, therefore, to hear Christ Jesus saying, 'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest.' He has gone up into the hill of frankincense. His own agony and suffering are past. He rests from the labour He had when He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself. He is seated on the right hand of power. But He 'worketh hitherto.' He has not ceased his toil for His people's sake. He has determined that they shall be holy, as He is holy, and perfect, as He is perfect. What *man* could set before him so grand, so limitless a purpose? At his best estate he is altogether vanity, and therefore he could neither give Jerusalem righteousness, nor make that righteousness brighter when once imparted. What is here described is the prerogative of Emmanuel alone. 'The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light,

and thy God thy glory.' (lx. 19.) And what Jehovah undertakes shall be accomplished. 'He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.' Isaiah could set no watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem. He was not the Master of the assemblies, nor the Chief Shepherd. It is only the glorified Son of Man who holds the seven stars in His right hand, which typify a perfect ministry. And so He alone can say, 'I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem.'

- I. Let us now notice for whom Christ cares.
- II. The two special objects He has in view. And,
- III. The unswerving stedfastness with which He pursues them.

I. Who are precious in the eyes of the Redeemer? For whom does He labour and intercede? It is for Zion, and for Jerusalem. Now the type would not be perfect if this were not true to the very letter. Zion is to be 'a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of her God.' (v. 3.) 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.' (Rom. xi. 29.) There is no change of purpose with Him. 'God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.' (Rom. xi. 2.) And so we look forward to a literal fulfilment of this prophecy, in which Zion shall 'no more be termed Forsaken, neither her land any more be

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termed Desolate :—when the Lord shall delight in her, and rejoice over her as His bride :—when the Gentiles shall come to her light and kings to the brightness of her rising. But as Israel was meant to be a type of the Church, we believe that this prophecy has a comprehensive application. There are many temporal blessings, which are reserved for Israel after the flesh. But the Jew will never have a monopoly of grace. Spiritual mercies are to be appropriated by the spiritual Israel. So when the Lord saith, ‘For Zion’s sake,’ He means, ‘For my Church’s sake I will not hold my peace, and for my people’s sake I will not rest.’ The Lord’s ransomed ones are precious to Him as the apple of His eye. What a contrast there is between the rulers of this world and the Prince of Peace ! Kings and statesmen have great nations at heart. For these they labour, and plead, and travail. The affection of the Lord Jesus is fixed on His little flock. The names of all its members are graven upon His heart. For them He continually intercedes. Their welfare constantly occupies His mind. For their sakes He will not hold His peace. Although Jesus has ceased from the work of redemption, He has not relaxed the work of government. Two great duties have been committed to Him. One is, upholding all things by the word of His power ; and the other is, executing the headship over His Church. By faith we see Christ not only crowned with glory, but filling His

body with His fulness. Oh, how much He loves us! His tongue never ceases to plead for us. His arm is ever stretched out on our behalf. For us who are His saints the world was created, for us kingdoms rise and fall. For us whom He has redeemed, and whom He sanctifies, He is continually engaged.

II. The two special objects Jesus has in view with reference to His Church are indicated in these words: 'Until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.' He wishes to make His people bright like the cherub, and burning like the seraph. John the Baptist was one of the most representative men who ever lived. He stood on the threshold of both covenants; he partook of the severity of the Old Testament, and shared the joy of the New Testament. Holiness, courage, and truthfulness, existed in him in an eminent degree. And of him the Master said, 'He was a burning and a shining light.' (John, v. 35.) The Lord would have us to be modelled after this pattern. Every perfect Christian, and every wise worker in Christ's vineyard, must reflect both these characters. He must both burn and shine, he must have an intense hatred of sin, and he must be bright with the constant apprehension of Christ's righteousness. The two can never be disconnected; we can never imagine the Church without glory or the Church without holiness. But these are different

aspects of the Bride of the Lamb. And, therefore, this passage in Isaiah seems to gather into a focus all that we have learned regarding the cherub and the seraph, and to invest it in a form full of practical encouragement for the Lord's people. The bright glory of the cherub and the fiery holiness of the seraph are God's eternal gifts to His Church.

1. Let us fix our eyes for a season on the brightness. God is 'the Father of glory.' And Jesus is 'the brightness of his Father's glory.' He 'dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto.' On this point Irving remarks with great beauty: 'Glory signifies that bright effulgence and out-bursting light, which bespeaks every other quality of a precious kind. As light was first created and became the bright precursor and joyful herald of a good creation, so glory hath the precedence in every enumeration of the redeemed world. When Christ shewed in Himself, or rather when the Father shewed in Him and unto His disciples, what is the excellency of redeemed nature, He shone with glorious light, which imbued the very garments wherewith He was arrayed. But of glory it were a poor conception to limit it to this visible effulgence; which is no more than the representation to the eye, which loves the light, of that surpassing goodness which every quality of the renewed nature doth possess, both to Him who enjoys and to them who behold it.' All this glory shall rest hereafter on the bride. She shall be 'all

glorious within,' and all glorious without. She 'hath the glory of God ;' 'and her light is like unto a stone most precious.' (Rev. xxi. 11.)

The colour of light is white. No colour, therefore, more fitly represents the beauty and holiness of the Lord Jesus. When St. John saw Him, His 'head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow.' The Lord rideth upon a white cloud, and sitteth upon a white horse. The bright cloud which overshadowed and enveloped Him at His transfiguration resembled the brilliant raiment which for a season He assumed, and which now is eternally His. Hereafter He will be seen seated on a great white throne. This is precisely the colour of the dress He gives His people. The righteousness wherewith they are clothed is resplendent with an unearthly lustre. To His bride was 'granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.' As soon as the sinner lays hold of the fact that he is perfectly justified, some rays from this glory light upon him. The new song is put in his mouth. New joy flashes from his eyes. But, as he walks across this wilderness world, his garments often become soiled and travel-stained. In order that he may not defile them, he must continually have them freshly sprinkled with the all-cleansing blood. The sooner the spots are washed out the better. Those are happy Christians who understand what Solomon

meant when he said: 'Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.' (Eccles. ix. 8.) It is the *beauty* of holiness that is thus typified, and the radiance that its possessor diffuses. He shines like a light in the world. He testifies to the world by his gladness and his decision. Our Master wishes that His righteousness may shine forth more gloriously from every believer; he longs that all His people may walk in the light: they are children of the day, and they are clad in armour of light. Why should it not be evident to all men how bright they are? The believer is perfectly justified the moment he believes, but does not always remember this. It is his Master's desire that he should never forget whose he is, and whom he serves. It is Christ's purpose that he should be perfectly happy. He longs that His saints may have the royal law of liberty stamped upon their foreheads, and exhibited in their lives. The true Israelites should appropriate the four blessings which the Jews of Shushan had as soon as the king had given Mordecai his ring,—'light, and gladness, and joy, and honour.' Faith wears the white dress, and strong faith makes it glisten. When the saint *knows* he is forgiven, Christ's life within him is mighty, and Christ's glory without him is attractive. Then he realizes that 'the joy of the Lord is his strength.' Jesus will not rest until His Church has full rest, perfect certainty, abounding joy, and

winning love:—in fact, ‘until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness.’ All this will be accomplished in the season appointed by our God. The true Israel will then hear and obey the word: ‘Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.’ (Isa. lx. 1.) ‘The Lord will be to her an everlasting light, and the days of her mourning will be ended.’ Then will all the pulses of the glorified body beat in perfect unison with the Redeemer’s will, and all the powers of the renewed spirit be exercised in His service. Then will the work the Heavenly Bridegroom is now carrying on be completed, that of sanctifying and cleansing the Church with the washing of water by the word, (Eph. v. 26, 27,) and He will ‘present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.’ Then will every child of the dust be covered with gold, and every disciple be bright as his Master. The passage in Ephesians shews that cleansing the Church within by the washing of God’s word tends to make it glorious without. And from 2 Cor. iii. 18 we learn, that when we behold the glory of the Lord reflected in the glass of His Word, as we look, we are changed into the same image; and that, when we see Him as He is, we are made like unto Him, and carried on from one degree of glory to another. Now it is ‘grace for grace,’ when we look at Jesus. (John, i. 16.) Hereafter it will be ‘from glory to glory.’

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Even now, if the eyes of our understanding were opened, we should know somewhat of 'the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints.' (Eph. i. 18.) Let us gaze on the Lord Jesus. His body is glorious; His right hand is glorious; He hath a glorious high throne; His gospel is glorious, and so is His power. And we look for His glorious appearing, when we shall follow part of the white-robed armies of heaven, who 'follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.' Lift up thy head, brother; thou shalt 'shine as the brightness of the firmament'; and, noble-hearted worker, thou shalt be a star in glory for ever and ever.

2. We must also search out the nature of the fire. The Holy Ghost is often typified by fire. 'The seven lamps of fire burning before the throne' were a figure of 'the seven spirits of God.' (Rev. iv. 5.) Fire is a striking symbol of the Spirit of God in His holiness—the Spirit of God burning up sin. When Christ baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with fire, 'he will throughly purge his floor.' It is a sifting, purifying work that is thus denoted. The same method is described in Isa. iv. 3, 4: 'And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: when the Lord . . . shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.' So

those possess *holiness* and *life* in an eminent degree who are purged by the burning work of the Holy Spirit. Now, although this symbol of fire, and 'burning coals of fire,' may be noticed in all the appearances of the cherubim, it seems singled out for special observation and instruction in the vision of the seraphim. The subject of the cry was the holiness of the Lord of hosts, and they place the holiness before the glory. One of the seraphs is the means of purging away the prophet's sin by a live coal from off the altar. And thus they typify the holiness which burns up all the dross of sin and selfishness. In an eminent degree this burning hatred of sin distinguished John the Baptist. He feared not to denounce sin before kings seated on their thrones. Thus both in his dauntless courage and his singular holiness of life he strongly resembled his great prototype Elijah. Verily he was a burning light. And this is what the Lord purposes to make us. The Holy Spirit is often compared to a burning lamp, to denote that the Church of Christ will be full of the Holy Ghost when her salvation goeth forth as a lamp that burneth. It is thus that the dross of sin and earthliness will be burnt up. For the same fire which burns up the ungodly purifies the saint. The fire which consumed Nadab and Abihu, Korah and his company, together with the two captains and their fifties who were sent to call Elijah, is not terrible to the be-

liever. In Isa. xxvii. the Lord had been speaking of burning up the briers and thorns. And in the 9th verse He promises, 'By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.' He doubtless means, 'by this fire.' The chaff and the withered branches will be burnt up, but the true Israel will be purified. In like manner Mr. Irving remarks: 'If I err not, this was the true meaning of all burnt sacrifices also which were offered upon the great altar, that nothing was fit to pass into the presence of God until it had passed through the fire.\* And he also excellently contrasts the baptism of fire with the baptism of water. 'Christ now baptizeth with the Holy Ghost under the symbol of water; but He shall yet baptize with the Holy Ghost under the symbol of fire. The one is unto the end of purifying our soul and conscience, the inward man of the heart, and enabling him to act effectively under a sinful nature; the other is the purification of that very nature itself, so that it shall be prone to do God's will, and able to fulfil all His pleasure.'† The Church of Christ will be like a burning lamp when it is perfectly holy. Then shall the Lord's people be 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing.' (Jam. i. 4.) When Christ appears, then will His saints be presented 'faultless before the presence of his glory.'

\* *Prophetic Works of Edward Irving*, vol. ii. p. 344.

† *Ibid.* p. 345.

(Jude 24.) The glory and the blamelessness will be united in their full development. Yet even now it is the Lord's desire that we should be steadily advancing towards this point. And we thank God that He is opening the eyes of His people to see what an ample provision He has made for their entire consecration. St. Paul points out to the Corinthians the mighty supply of grace which has been vouchsafed, and then he continues: 'Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.' (2 Cor. vii. 1.) Why should the duty of renouncing all sin be recognized, and yet the standard thereby implied regarded as unattainable? There is a scriptural method in which we are to 'cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit,' while at the same time we most unreservedly acknowledge that no member of the Church can ever be 'without spot or blemish' until Jesus appears in His glory. When the blessed truth is grasped in all its fulness that the Lord has entire power to sanctify, the land of Beulah will be almost reached, and the struggling disciple will feel that he has been brought through fire and water into the wealthy place, but his salvation will not go forth as a lamp that burneth until he sees the King's face.

Nor must the student of God's Word omit to notice, that, however closely allied, there is a real

distinction between the cherubic and seraphic aspects of the Church of Christ. In the cherub we see the attractiveness of the glory without. In the seraph we mark the purity of the holy nature within. The cherub's brightness portrays an apprehended justification; the seraph's fervent glow indicates a growing sanctification. The expression, 'salvation,' is several times used in Scripture to denote the Holy Spirit's progressive work in the soul. Thus when we read in Acts, ii. 47, 'the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved,' the Greek has *τοὺς σωζόμενους*—'those who were being saved.' Conversion must take place at a single point; salvation often occupies years. The apprehension of justification must be instantaneous, although years of anxious searching may have preceded. But full salvation, or the redemption of all the powers and affections of the inner man from Satan to Christ, is frequently the work of a long period. It need not be so; but this has hitherto been its normal condition in the Church. In Rom. v. 10, 'saved' evidently means 'fully sanctified.' 'For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' We obtain full salvation by the *life* of the Lord Jesus. We are sanctified by letting Him *live* and work in us. We hang upon Him, and obtain new supplies of His risen life. Oh, do not trust to your own frames and feelings, your own efforts and

resolutions, for sanctification, but to the life of Jesus. It is evidently in this sense that the word 'salvation' is used in Isa. lxii. 1. It means entire holiness, as well as full redemption.

III. We may ask, however, Is there any probability that this grand ideal will ever be realized? Will this glorious picture ever burst upon the eye of the ravished saint? The name and the nature of Him who guarantees it is our sure ground of confidence. His promise and His oath are immutable things. And it is He who has declared, 'I will not hold my peace—I will not rest,' until a bright and burning splendour go forth from mine own Jerusalem. In the case of Israel after the flesh, this prophecy will be fulfilled in those millennial days 'when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.' This is clear from Isa. lxii. 2: 'And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory.' The righteousness and the glory will therefore be made visible on the earth. All that we read in the sixtieth and sixty-first chapters confirms this. The returning sons of Jacob will 'fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows.' 'The sons of strangers will build up' Zion's 'walls.' The 'gates shall be open continually.' 'Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and vindressers.

But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord.' (Isa. lx. 8-11 ; lxi. 5, 6.) It will be proclaimed, not in heaven, but 'unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh.' (lxii. 11.) Then will Israel shine forth in all the beauty of holiness.

With regard to Christ's Church as a whole, this prophecy will be accomplished when the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and their newly-assumed bodies are fashioned like the body of His glory. Then will the bride of the Lamb have the glory of God ; and 'her light will be like unto a stone most precious.' (Rev. xxi. 11.) Then will Gentile and Jew be 'called by a new name,' which will be stamped upon their foreheads, and written upon their hearts.

This period of perfect holiness and unruffled joy is hastening on. How unwavering is the stedfastness with which the Lord Jesus pursues His object ! He intercedes for us unceasingly with His Father. And if 'we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him,' it is still more undoubted that whatever the Son asks is granted. This is our ground of confidence. We are persuaded that He is able to save believers 'to the uttermost' \*—i.e. completely to sanctify them—to hallow their entire nature, 'seeing he ever liveth to make intercession

\* Gr. *ιεις τὸ παντοτίσις.*

for them.' (Heb. vii. 25.) Just as the high priest of Israel bore the names of all the tribes upon his heart for a memorial before the Lord, so has our unchangeable High Priest a perpetual remembrance of our names and necessities while He pleads. He cries, 'Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands.' Thou art set as a seal upon mine heart.

The Lord also carries on this work by stirring up His people to see the glorious purposes for which He has reserved them, and the blessings He yearns to communicate to them. He sets before them the standard He intends them to reach, and the method by which they are to approach it. It is on their side alone that there are stumbling-blocks and hindrances. There is no unwillingness in our Heavenly Father to listen to His Son's advocacy, or to grant His requests; but there is a great unreadiness in believers to submit to their Master's teachings. They often shrink from His chastisements, and they fear the Refiner's fire. There is a tie to the world which they are unwilling to sever. There is a secret inclining to the foe of which they are hardly aware. And so, because they look down so much and look up so little, this work does not make such progress within them as it should. Yet even these hindrances will not be permitted to retard the growth of grace in the children of God. There is Almighty force in the Divine 'shall.' 'Thou *shalt* be a crown of

glory.' 'Thy God *shall* rejoice over thee.' And never was there a time when the Lord's people searched the promises more diligently than at the present moment. And in proportion to the faith He has inspired and called forth, God is bestowing upon them fuller peace and greater joy, while they are emboldened to utter in His name a more definite personal testimony.

Nor is this a toil which the Lord Jesus will lay aside, after once undertaking. 'I will not hold my peace, *until* the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness.' Years may pass, and the tempest-tossed one may think he shall never reach the haven. The fearful one may suppose he shall always be a dry tree. The disconsolate one may imagine that he will never be God's instrument in bringing souls to Christ. Yet all that God has purposed will undoubtedly come to pass. The righteousness of every saint will 'go forth as brightness.' The salvation of every believer will appear 'as a lamp that burneth.' The children of Israel did not seem to be approaching Canaan when they were encompassing Mount Seir, but the whole of their journey was appointed by God, and each day brought them nearer their inheritance. Much unbelief has to be removed, and much idolatry to be conquered, before the forgiven sinner can leave the wilderness. But he will surely come up out of it, leaning on His Beloved. The desolate country shall be left behind,

and the land of Beulah shall be trodden, with its sweet songs of victory. If you seem to be weary, your Saviour never rests. And the work is His, not your own.

The greatest encouragement arises from an ample provision that has been made for your productiveness, and the complete armour prepared for your battle. The Lord could not say, 'Arise, shine,' unless He added, 'thy light is come.' Yea, He saith, 'My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth.' (Isa. li. 5.) It flies swift as an eagle towards him who longs to receive it. And how comforting is the promise regarding the vineyard of red wine in Isa. xxvii. 3: 'I the Lord do keep it; I will water it *every moment*: lest any hurt it, I will keep it *night and day*.' The most complete security is thus given. The guarantee extends to every moment of your life; it covers your sleeping as well as your waking thoughts. When Christ saith that He will not hold His peace until your righteousness go forth as brightness, He means to bring you to glory; and when He saith that your salvation shall go forth as a lamp that burneth, He purposes at last to drive out every remnant of sin.

One means by which Christ carries on His work in His Church is indicated in *vv. 6, 7*: 'I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him

no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.' The Lord's ministers and co-workers are animated with the same untiring activity with Himself. Even if here and there a labourer should flag and hang down his hands for a season, the Spirit of life will move the wheels which upbear the Church. It is *the supply* of watchmen that is unceasing. The activity of the Universal Church waxes greater and greater. The flame of their prayers and the incense of their intercessions ascends higher and higher. All through the ages the saints of God have wrestled with Him for this object, that He would make His Church a praise and a joy in the earth. Year after year they have laboured in His strength to promote this blessed purpose. Their voice has been like the voice of many waters. They have kept no silence, either in prayer or in witness. And hereafter they will keep no silence in praise, as they 'rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.'

**'WORTHY IS THE LAMB THAT WAS SLAIN TO RECEIVE POWER, AND RICHES, AND WISDOM, AND STRENGTH, AND HONOUR, AND GLORY, AND BLESSING.'**







